

Bomb explodes inside 'security zone'

MARIYOUN, Lebanon (Agencies) — A roadside bomb exploded Monday as an Israeli patrol passed through a village inside Israel's self-styled "security zone" in South Lebanon, security sources said. The sources said there was no immediate report of casualties from the fourth bomb incident in three days. They said the patrol was passing through the village of Ashkhiyeh at 9:45 a.m. (0745 GMT) when the bomb went off. A few hours later, unidentified guerrillas fired two rockets at a position manned by the Israeli-affiliated South Lebanon Army (SLA) in the village of Tallousa inside the zone, U.N. sources said. They did not have an immediate report of casualties. A United Nations officer with the U.N. peacekeeping force in South Lebanon said the attack occurred at 1:30 p.m. (1130 GMT). He said the Israeli forces and SLA militiamen retaliated with tank and artillery fire on the villages of Majdal Silim, Kabriha and Towlin, destroying one house in Majdal Silim. The roadside bomb was the fourth that was found or detonated inside the "security zone" since Saturday. On Sunday, two guerrillas were killed when a roadside bomb they were planting in Tallousa exploded prematurely. An SLA patrol later found another unexploded bomb in the same area.

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Iraq warns Turkey

NICOSIA (AP) — Iraq has called on Turkey to discuss with Baghdad and Damascus its project to build a new dam and hydroelectric power station on the Euphrates River. The Iraqi News Agency said that the foreign ministry "warned that the countries involved in the project would be held internationally responsible for the resulting damage." At the end of last year, Turkey awarded to a consortium of German, French, Belgian, Austrian and Turkish companies a contract to build the new dam. The 672-megawatt project is to be completed at the end of 1998.

ANC: Israel ties depends on peace

TEL AVIV (AP) — An African National Congress (ANC) delegation issued a list of conditions Monday for deepening ties with Israel, including Israeli agreement to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and set up a Palestinian state. A visiting group of the ANC Youth League said official relations between Israel and the black South African independence movement were "a remote possibility," and it would not recommend that ANC leader Nelson Mandela accept Israel's invitation to visit.

Turks mourn murdered journalist

ANKARA (R) — Mourners lit candles and laid flowers Monday on the muddy Ankara street where a car bomb killed prominent Turkish journalist Ugur Mumcu Sunday. His colleagues also lit candles at the Iranian consulate in Istanbul in protest at the killing. Three Islamic organisations are among those which have claimed responsibility, police said.

WFP to increase Iraq food aid

ROME (R) — The U.N.'s World Food Programme (WFP) said Monday its operations in Iraq had not been affected by allied air raids and that it planned to increase aid to the central and southern areas of the country. The WFP, the food-aid arm of the United Nations, said in a statement it was completing the purchase of 5,200 tonnes of supplies for delivery to the central and southern provinces. The organisation has already supplied 1,700 tonnes of food commodities.

Sudan denies Iranian presence

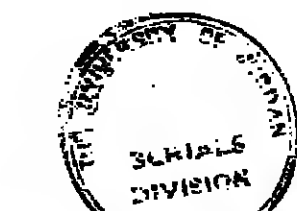
NICOSIA (R) — Sudan's Foreign Minister Ali Sabhoun has denied Egyptian claims that his country played host to Iranian military advisers training Muslim militants. In an interview carried by the Iranian news agency IRNA late Sunday, Mr. Sabhoun said Sudan had repeatedly invited Egyptian officials to see for themselves. "If Egyptian inspectors were sent to Sudan then the falsehood of the claims by the Egyptian government would be universal knowledge, and Egypt would have no theme for its propaganda purposes," IRNA quoted him as saying. Mr. Sabhoun returned to Sudan Saturday after a two-day visit to Tehran.

2 French soldiers killed in Croatia

PARIS (R) — Two French U.N. peace-keepers were killed during artillery exchanges between Serb and Croat forces in the Krajina area of Croatia Monday, a U.N. spokeswoman told Radio France-Info from Zagreb. Spokeswoman Shannon Boyd said further three French soldiers were wounded during exchanges of heavy artillery and tank fire in the area of Zadar, on the Croatian coast.

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Israel optimistic on peace with Syria

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Monday he believed Syrian President Hafez Al Assad was moving closer to peace with the Jewish state. "It was interesting that Assad said he is looking for peace in the full sense of the word," Mr. Peres said after meeting the parliamentary foreign affairs and defence committee. "Whoever knows Assad's style had to be impressed by the optimistic colour in the Syrians' cheeks," he told reporters. "I think there is movement among them." Mr. Peres said Syria had agreed to continue U.S.-brokered peace talks even if a crisis over Israel's expulsion of 415 Palestinians to Lebanon is not resolved. Mr. Peres' assessment contrasted with a declaration Sunday by Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa, who urged U.S. President Bill Clinton to save the talks from stalemate. Israel's 15-month-old peace talks with Syria — initially considered the toughest — made unexpected progress after Israel agreed United Nations resolutions on trading land for peace applied to the Golan Heights. Syria wants Israel to return the entire Golan, Israel has said its army could withdraw from parts of the plateau in return for peace with Syria.

Aziz: Iraq seeks no quarrel with U.S.

Baghdad urges new era in ties, meets U.N. demand for nuclear list

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQI DEPUTY Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said Monday his country seeks no confrontation with the United States but was not happy so far with the stance of the new U.S. administration. "We do not want to be in continuous confrontation with the United States of America," Mr. Aziz said in an interview with Cable News Network (CNN) television.

But he accused President Bill Clinton's defence secretary, Les Aspin, of "an arrogant and belligerent response" to the Iraqi initiative of offering a unilateral ceasefire to end a wave of allied air raids and missile strikes.

"I hope this will not be the position of the new administration," Mr. Aziz said. "If the new administration shows any willingness to have a new relationship... that would be very much welcome," Mr. Aziz said.

"There should be a new style in which people could talk in a civilised manner to discuss the issues."

Mr. Aziz said the Iraqi offer not to shoot at Western planes flying over the south and north had no fixed time limit and Baghdad was giving Washington at least several months to reconsider its policy towards his country. Iraq argues that the "no-fly" zones are illegal and says its



Iraqi President Saddam Hussein

Monday meets with senior military officers (AFP - copy of INA photo)

ceasefire offer is a gesture of goodwill towards President Clinton. Mr. Aziz said the main problem between Iraq and the Bush administration was that Mr. Bush personalised the confrontation and wanted to see the Iraqi government toppled.

"This should not be the objective of the new administration. It is illegal, it is futile and it simply didn't work in the past," he said. Pressed on whether Iraq still claimed sovereignty over Kuwait, Mr. Aziz said: "The chapter of Kuwait is closed." He did not

elaborate.

Mr. Aziz said "Iraq has never targeted" an allied plane, calling allied statements that Iraq fired anti-aircraft artillery and used its radar to target the warplanes "fabrications."

Mr. Aziz said that if the Clinton administration showed "any intention to have a new kind of relations with Iraq, based on mutual respect of sovereignty, based on international law under normal standards of behaviour of nations, then that will be very much welcomed in Iraq."

He said he hoped that would not be the "firm position of the new administration."

Iraq announced a unilateral ceasefire on Jan. 19 in the "no-fly" zone in southern Iraq against allied warplanes. But U.S. pilots have reported several hostile incidents, such as radar lock-ons on their aircraft, and anti-aircraft fire.

On Sunday, Mr. Aspin told an American television interviewer the subject of U.S. policy was to ensure that Iraq complied with the U.N. Security Council's ceasefire resolution, but he added:

"I personally believe that also means Saddam Hussein has to go."

Mr. Aziz described this as a "whimsical interpretation" of the U.N. resolution.

Appearing on the CBS television show "Face the Nation," Mr. Aspin said it would not be a successful outcome if President Saddam were ousted and his successor still did not comply with United Nations resolutions.

But he summed up his view by saying: "The object is to comply with the U.N. resolutions. I personally believe that also means that Saddam Hussein has to go."

Mr. Aspin said he was not sure there is a difference between getting rid of President Saddam and enforcing compliance with U.N. resolutions.

"If there is a difference, the clear thing that we're interested in is compliance with the U.N. resolutions," he said.

Then he added, "I think that the focus of it... and I do agree that we ought to depersonalise it... ought to be that Iraq complies with the U.N. resolutions, meaning that even if Saddam Hussein were to leave, his successor ought to comply with the U.N. resolutions."

Mr. Aziz said Iraq was not "asking favours" from Mr. Clinton.

"We would like this administration to review the situation to (Continued on page 5)



King visits army HQ

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday visited the Army Headquarters accompanied by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker.

They were welcomed by Field Marshal Fathi Abu Taleh, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the commander of the land forces and the commander of the Jordanian Royal Air Force as well as assistants and the army inspector-general.

The King had a meeting with Field Marshal Abu Taleh on topics of concern to the Armed Forces.

The King listened to a briefing on studies conducted in military fields and issued his directives on some of them.

Royal Court Chief Khaled Karaki, Minister of Higher Education Awad Khleifat, Finance Minister Basel Jaraneh and Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Ali Abul Ragheh were present at the meeting along with the directors of the Public Intelligence and Civil Defence departments and senior army officers.

Evictees say waiting sets dangerous precedent

MARJ AL ZOHOOR, Lebanon (R) — Palestinian expellees said Monday the United States and the United Nations would set a dangerous precedent if they waited for Israel's high court to rule on the evictees' future before imposing sanctions.

"The U.S. policy is dangerous," Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi, spokesman for the 396 meevahs stranded in South Lebanon, said "it makes the Security Council less authoritative than Israel's high court."

Israeli news report said U.S. President Bill Clinton promised Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin Saturday that the Security Council would not vote on sanctions against Israel before the high court ruling.

"How can the world go so silent while it waits for the Israeli high court decision?" Dr. Rantisi told reporters at the increasingly dirty camp.

"This silence is remarkable especially when it comes after the U.N. Security Council has clearly stated its stand in a resolution demanding our immediate return," he added.

The Israeli high court, meeting to discuss the legality of the expulsions, was to hear the government explain Monday what provisions would be made for the evictees to attend appeal hearings.

A ruling on the expulsions is expected later this week. Dr. Rantisi said the court followed political orders and Palestinians did not trust it or expect it to reverse their expulsion.

The Security Council, in a resolution passed on Dec. 18, demanded that Israel take back all the expellees immediately.

Three weeks ago U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali said he would recommend further steps against Israel if Israel stuck by its refusal to take the evictees back.

But so far nothing has happened and the expellees have now been languishing in their tented encampment, between Israeli and Lebanese army lines, for more than five weeks.

The evictees and Arab states accuse the United Nations of using double standards by enforcing resolutions on Iraq and Libya but not those on Israel.

The Rabin told the cabinet Sunday he was confident Mr. Clinton would keep to the U.S. policy of protecting Israel from sanctions.

On Monday the evictees reinforced the makeshift camp against an expected snowstorm. The Palestinians, many well-educated, dug around tents and gathered firewood in the bitter cold. Lebanese guerrillas have smuggled food by mule over mountains to the camp in the past few nights.

Fresh supplies brought overnight included shoes, medicine, canned food and processed cheese.

On Saturday British military helicopters evacuated from the camp 13 evictees whom Israel said were expelled by mistake.

They were flown to Israel, where most bunched off to a desert detention camp in the south. The rest, including two men the army says will be freed after questioning, were jailed.

The helicopters also took out four sick evictees. They were taken to a hospital in Israel's "security zone" in South Lebanon. Journalists have been prevented from seeing them.

Dr. Rantisi said the evictees were enjoying "throwing punches at the Israeli government for its Nazi behaviour."

"We will definitely return and we will rub Rabin's nose in the mud," he added.

The evictees have resumed their routine after the Saturday's evacuation of the 17. Many of them were seen bringing in fresh food and heating gas supplies to their hillside camp. Physicians among them also have been extending medical help to villagers of the neighbouring hamlet of Lebbya, who have been smuggling food to the makeshift camp.

"I have so far examined 10 cases, mainly with respiratory and chest infections and rheumatism and prescribed medication for them," said Dr. Omar Farawneh, head of the camp's medical committee.

Israel says expellees will be allowed their 'legal rights'

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel, maintaining it was not infringing the legal rights of Palestinians expelled to Lebanon, said Monday they were free to meet their attorneys.

The government, answering a question from the seven-judge high court of justice, said it would let expellees consult a lawyer or relative representing them in individual appeals against their expulsions.

In a six-page document, the government said they could meet at the Zmura exit from Israel's self-declared Lebanon "security zone," about two kilometres from the evictees' freezing makeshift tent camp.

The court was due to rule later this week on the legality of the expulsions of the 415 Palestinians ordered by the occupation authorities on Dec. 17.

Israel expelled them for alleged links to militant groups that killed six soldiers last month.

British military helicopters plucked 17 Palestinians from their icy tent camp Saturday, taking four to hospital and 13 to

Israel.

Israel said the 13 had been expelled by mistake. One sick expellee and one person expelled by mistake were airlifted out earlier.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin dismissed expectations the high court would order the return of the evictees to save Israel from world condemnation.

"I am sorry voices are being heard as if someone has to rescue the government. It needs no rescue. It needs to stand by its position," Mr. Rabin told reporters in southern Israel.

"I am sticking by the position we took then. And I am full of hope the high court of justice will approve it," he said.

Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana flew to Israel from Cairo Monday hoping to bridge the Arab-Israeli gap over the evictees, which threatens the future of 15-month-old Middle East peace talks (see page 2).

International pressure against Israel over the expulsions mounted with the arrival of three other senior European emissar-

ies.

The U.N. Security Council has condemned the Dec. 17 expulsion as a violation of international law and U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali has hinted he would support sanctions against Israel unless it showed more flexibility.

Israel has been trying to delay another Security Council session on the expulsions until after the high court has ruled.

Israel media commentators have speculated that the government may actually be hoping the court will order a compromise so that Israel can extract itself from its difficult international position without losing face.

Mr. Rabin again defended his decision to expel the Palestinians who Israel says threaten the Middle East peace talks and Israel's security.

"I am convinced that the government behaved correctly... I will stick to the stand we had at the time. I am very hopeful that the supreme court will uphold it,"

(Continued on page 5)

2 killed in shooting outside CIA

MCLEAN, VIRGINIA (AP) — A man opened fire Monday morning at the entrance of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) killing two people and wounding at least three, Fairfax County authorities said.

Police said they were searching for the gunman, described by a witness as a man in his 20s carrying a hunting rifle. Another witness said it appeared the man was firing an automatic weapon.

The two dead were shot and killed near the CIA's main gate about 8 a.m. (1300 GMT), fire department spokesman Mike Reilly said minutes after the shooting. One other person was shot at the gate, while two others were wounded in the agency's visitors centre, he said.

The visitors spokeswoman Jackie Collier said she did not have a description of the suspect.

"I heard the pop, pop," Gilbert Robinson, who witnessed the shooting, told NBC Television's "Today" programme. "It was surreal."

Mr. Robinson said the man was near a spotlight about 100 metres from the gate, standing in between cars and randomly shooting at cars. CIA employees turn at the light into the agency grounds.

"He seemed to be randomly pointing, to the right, to the left, to the right, to the left, just shooting at cars," Mr. Robinson said, describing the gun as an automatic weapon, "maybe an AK-47."

"I kept my eyes focused on the gun because I didn't know if it was going to be pointed in my direction," he said, adding that the man "looked quite agitated" and appeared to be wearing an army field jacket.

Dr. Barry Burka, another witness, told the Cable News Network (CNN) that the shooting occurred at a spotlight. A young man who appeared to be in his 20s was shooting into windshields, Mr. Burka said.

Mr. Burka and his wife, who were in their car, sped away from the scene.

CIA officials, many of whom were en route to work when the shooting occurred, were not immediately available for comment.

The main gates onto the CIA grounds are usually open during the morning and afternoon as employees arrive and leave work. Private guards employed by the agency check workers' passes and require visitors to stop and identify themselves.

The Guards at the gate are armed with sidearms.

Arafat challenges Rabin to be 'brave' and make peace

PARIS (Agencies) — Yasser Arafat has demanded in a newspaper interview that Israeli leader Yitzhak Rabin act bravely and make peace with the Palestinians, and urged the United States to resume a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

"We need a courageous man to make a courageous peace," Mr. Arafat was quoted as saying by L'Humanite, the French Communist Party's newspaper, in an interview conducted at the PLO's headquarters in Tunis.

Mr. Rabin rejected Mr. Arafat's unprecedented appeal on Israeli Television Thursday for a meeting to discuss a peace settlement.

Israel officially views the PLO as a "terrorist" organisation and refuses to recognise it, though the Israeli parliament has overturned a law barring citizens from meeting PLO members.

"I am a practical man," Mr. Arafat was quoted as saying in the interview, appearing in Monday's editions. "I have to take reality into account. And I'm sad to see that Rabin follows the same policy as Shamir."

The PLO chairman was referring to Yitzhak Shamir, the hard-line former Israeli prime minister who only reluctantly agreed to take part in Middle East peace talks sponsored by the United States and Russia.

Though PLO officials are banned at Israel's insistence from the Middle East peace talks, the Palestinian delegation takes directions from the organisation.

Fifteen months after the talks opened in Madrid, "the result is zero," Mr. Arafat was quoted as saying.

Mr. Arafat was quoted as saying that the PLO would find it "very difficult," though not necessarily impossible, to resume the talks until Israel allows more than 400 Palestinians expelled to southern Lebanon to return.

The PLO leader urged the United States, the European Community, the United Nations and Egypt, the only Arab country to have signed a peace treaty with Israel, to help mediate the crisis.

"We expect to make contact with the new American administration," Mr. Arafat was quoted as saying.

The contacts would be aimed at

restoring the shrunken U.S.-PLO dialogue that ended in May 1990 when a PLO faction launched a raid on an Israeli beach.

"Otherwise, the (peace) process will be unbalanced," Mr. Arafat said. "That would signify that the American administration will only treat with one party and ignore the other."

Mr. Arafat warned that the recent allied attacks on Iraq could create a "dangerous imbalance" in the Gulf should Baghdad's military power be destroyed.

Habash hits peace process

Veteran Palestinian leader George Habash attacked the Middle East peace talks on Monday as a trap aimed at making Palestinians give up the only weapons they had in their battle for an independent state.

Dr. Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), said in an interview in Damascus that the talks denied the Palestinians rights guaranteed in United Nations resolutions and would end

(Continued on page 5)

Bush aide warns Clinton of potential Somalia quagmire

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — A warning to President Bill Clinton from a newly departed Bush administration official: Getting U.S. troops out of Somalia will not be nearly as easy as you might think.

John Bolton, a key architect of Mr. Bush's U.N. policy, said shortly before stepping down last week that Somalia would be a "major dilemma" for Mr. Clinton.

Under the current plan, U.S. troops withdrawing from Somalia are to be replaced by U.N. forces. But Mr. Bolton raised the prospect of a prolonged U.S. stay because U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali has the final say, not Mr. Clinton.

Mr. Bolton's prediction contrasts with that of former Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, who said last week he expects nearly all U.S. forces to be withdrawn by mid-year at the latest. The initial withdrawals began last Tuesday but Mr. Bolton said he doubts the process will last.

"The secretary-general effectively has a veto over the finality of U.S. withdrawals," Mr. Bolton said.

If Washington decides three weeks from now that it is time for a complete U.S. withdrawal and Dr. Ghali disagrees, it would be very difficult for Mr. Clinton to say, "we're leaving anyway," Mr. Bolton said.

And, he added, given the level of weaponry in Somalia, "U.S. forces are going to be at risk." Mr. Bolton, whose formal title was assistant secretary of state for international organizations, lobbied hard behind the scenes against Mr. Bush's decision in November to deploy U.S. troops in Somalia.

He agreed to talk about his dissent only on the condition that he not be quoted until after Mr. Clinton was sworn in.

"I'd hate to be fired," he said in an interview 24 hours before abandoning his sixth floor State Department office.

He reflected on his thinking last fall when the U.S. deployment was under discussion.

"It was concerned that it was a lot easier to get into Somalia than it was to get out," said Mr. Bolton, adding that he would have preferred a large-scale commitment of U.N. forces at the outset instead of U.S. troops.

In opting to send U.S. forces, the Bush administration was wor-

ried that 1.5 million Somalis could die unless quick action was taken.

The seeds of the dilemma Mr. Bolton foresees were planted during a key late November meeting in New York between Dr. Ghali and Mr. Eagleburger. Dr. Ghali mistakenly felt he had a commitment from Mr. Eagleburger that the Somalis would be disarmed by U.S. troops, Mr. Bolton said.

He believes Dr. Ghali will be reluctant to commit U.N. troops to Somalia so long as large quantities of weapons remain available to Somali gangs, thus laying the groundwork for an extended U.S. presence.

Some of the concerns Mr. Bolton outlined were being reinforced at the United Nations even as he spoke Tuesday.

U.N. spokesman Joe Sills said the United Nations will take control of Somalia peacekeeping forces only gradually. His comments appeared to make it unlikely that the Feb. 1 U.S. deadline for transferring military control of Somalia to a U.N. command can be met.

Three Somalis killed

Three Somalis have been killed in the last 24 hours in a spate of clashes with Belgian troops taking part in famine relief operations in the southern Somali port of Kismayu, a Belgian army spokesman said Sunday.

Colonel Guy Vervotte told a news conference that a Somali woman was mortally wounded by gunfire when Belgian soldiers escorting a convoy came under attack.

Belgian soldiers Saturday night attacked a house after coming under fire from its occupants. Two Somalis were killed in the shootout.

Belga news agency said one Belgian soldier was wounded in a grenade attack on a Belgian military column Sunday on the way to the airport.

Six other Belgian soldiers were slightly injured in two separate grenade attacks Friday and Saturday, the first since the Belgian sent almost 600 soldiers to the area last month to take part in the international relief operation.

Elsewhere in Somalia, French troops Sunday shot and slightly wounded two Somalis after coming under fire from four gunmen on the road from Baidoa to Hodur in the central part of the country.



REBUILT FACILITY: Iraqi children walk past a baby-milk factory beside a portrait of President Saddam Hussein with children. The milk plant, which was devastated in allied attacks in the Gulf war, was rebuilt and became operational last Thursday (AFP photo).

Kuwait's ruling Al Sabahs face mounting challenges

By Kathy Evans

AS THE threat from Iraq recedes, Kuwait's ruling Sabah family faces the greatest challenge to its authority — this time from within.

Senior family members are under investigation for their conduct during and after the Gulf war, and over allegations that large sums of public money have been embezzled or lost through mismanagement and corruption.

Opposition figures say they do not know where the investigations will lead or whether they might result in members of the royal family being jailed. "We are working in the dark. There is no precedent for us to follow," said one leading member of parliament (MP).

Kuwait's embryonic democracy is already conspicuous in a region known for its autocratic rulers. Leading opposition figures are aware of the dangers of pressures building up from neighbours such as Saudi Arabia and are also under pressure from voters to avoid outright confrontation with the royal family which would risk dissolution of the national assembly again.

Abdullah Nibari, member of Parliament (MP) for the liberal opposition Kuwait Democratic Forum, said: "Democracy has not taken root in this area. Kuwait's democracy is not just for Kuwaitis but for the whole Gulf. The priority is to preserve the experiment and prove

ourselves credible and capable in government."

Investigations into the Sabah family are just part of the political agenda of the new opposition-dominated parliament elected last October. The poll brought six MPs into the cabinet for the first time, one of whom had been jailed for opposition activities. Sabah family members hold only four cabinet posts.

Committees have been set up to repeat tough security laws banning the right of public assembly and the formation of clubs and associations. The MPs also want to curtail the government's right to detain people on suspicion for indefinite periods and to guarantee orderly police investigations without torture.

The parliamentary committee on human rights hopes to force the government to allow more newspapers to be published and to guarantee their freedom.

For the Sabahs, the most politically sensitive investigation — although not the one which will look into events leading up to and following Iraq's invasion in 1990.

Senior Sabah-ministers have already testified on why the army had no orders and was not on alert for the invasion. The MPs also want to look into how the war and government in exile was managed financially.

Mr. Nibari, a member of the investigating tribunal, said that a compromise had been struck with the government to limit the pow-

ers of the tribunal to fact finding. If, however, any wrongdoing was uncovered, the tribunal could be transformed into a panel with judicial powers with the right to summon and prosecute whoever it thought necessary.

Kuwaitis say the Sabah family is cooperating with the tribunal in the hope that the episode can be put behind them.

Legal forgiveness may not be so forthcoming from the public over the financial scandals threatening to swamp the Sabahs.

Three parliamentary committees and the attorney-general are looking into what happened to Kuwait's \$7 billion of investments in Spain, now under liquidation. Financial consultants say the investments were made in the wrong place at the wrong price with the wrong management.

Allegations of mismanagement have been compounded by accusations that some senior Kuwait investment office officials in London were also engaged in embezzlement. A number of accounts were said to have been set up in Switzerland when there were questions over whether Kuwait would survive the Iraqi occupation. Two senior investment office officials have fled to the Bahamas, out of reach of the Kuwaiti and British judicial systems.

The Sabah family is also said to be among some of the prominent debtors to the banking system. — The Guardian.

Solana pledges efforts to reinvigorate peace talks

CAIRO (Agencies) — Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana said Monday his country would do its utmost to boost the faltering Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.

"We hope President (Bill) Clinton's administration will foster the peace process launched by President (George) Bush's administration," Mr. Solana told reporters after meeting with President Hosni Mubarak.

Mr. Solana arrived in Cairo Sunday on a two-day visit, part of a Middle East tour that had taken him to Jordan and Syria. He flew to Israel immediately after the meeting with Mr. Mubarak.

As a member of the European Community (EC) and the U.N. Security Council, Mr. Solana said, Spain "will do everything in its power to end the stagnation in the peace process."

It was in Madrid, Spain, that Arab-Israeli negotiations sponsored by the United States and Russia were launched in October 1991. Eight rounds have been held without producing tangible progress.

The decision to award Dr. Leibowitz has sparked public debate for the past week. The furor intensified Sunday after Dr. Leibowitz broadened his attack to include undercover soldiers who masqueraded as Arabs to capture wanted Palestinians in the occupied territories.

"The undercover squads are our Hamas," Dr. Leibowitz was quoted as saying by Israeli dailies Sunday. He also told Israel Radio Sunday the Israeli squads were responsible for the deaths of 20 Arab children.

Ministers voted 15 to one at the weekly cabinet session to condemn granting the prize to Dr. Leibowitz, a professor of biochemistry and neurophysiology, an authority on Jewish philosophy and religion and an editor of the Hebrew encyclopedia.

Health Minister Haim Ramon told reporters that "the government decided first of all that it condemns the terrible, horrible, nauseating statement of Professor Leibowitz who compared soldiers... to the Hamas."

Israeli media said Mr. Rabin also told the cabinet he would boycott the official presentation.

Dr. Leibowitz said he was surprised to be named for the prize but also taken aback by the furor it has stirred.

He noted he was outspokenly criticised the policies of every Israeli government since 1967 for "occupying the captured territories and ruling over people, or two million people who are deprived of civil and political rights."

Asked why he did not want to accept the prize, Dr. Leibowitz replied, "because this has raised such a public furor."

Israel cuts benefits to some settlements

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's government endorsed a development plan Sunday that included the cancellation of benefits and subsidies enjoyed by a number of Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank.

The plan shifts government benefits, including income tax breaks and private and public investment subsidies, to the underdeveloped northern and southern reaches of Israel.

Benefits would continue in the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, Arab East Jerusalem, a swathe of the West Bank around Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley.

Four ministers from the left-wing Meretz Party voted against the plan because it did not cut benefits to all settlements on occupied Arab land, cabinet sources said.

The Jewish settlements are a major subject of controversy in 14-month-old Middle East peace talks.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's chief of staff, Shimon Shevas, defended the plan which he was principal in drawing.

"It has cut off areas given preference in the past and gives to areas the government thinks need renewed priority," he said.

Mr. Shevas said distance from Israel's centre and socio-economic not political considerations set the benefit redistribution.

He said Israel's Arab commu-

ity, a population of 750,000 out of five million, would enjoy equal development benefits.

"There is no difference between Jewish communities and Arab and bedouin communities (in Israel under the plan). That is one of the great revolutions this brings," he said.

Mr. Rabin, who swept former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir aside in a June national election, campaigned pledging to shift resources from settlement of occupied Arab lands to Israel.

But the only surprise in the new development plan approved Sunday was that it continued benefits to some 3,000 Jewish settlers who live among 800,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

A former army chief of staff who led Israel's army in the 1967 war, Mr. Rabin, even during the election campaign, said he would settle "greater Jerusalem," the Jordan Valley and the Golan.

Mr. Rabin last year won \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees, denied Mr. Shamir who refused any settlement curb during the U.S. sponsored peace talks, when he froze new building contracts in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Thousands of units under construction were allowed to be completed.

The government at that time had announced it was working on the benefit redistribution plan.

Israeli philosopher refuses to accept controversial honour

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — A 90-year-old Israeli philosopher, who once said occupation of Arab land could turn Israelis into Judeo-Nazis, declined his country's top honour Sunday.

Yeshayahu Leibowitz turned down the Israel prize after Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said he would boycott the award ceremony in April.

"Why should I cause complications for the prime minister?" Dr. Leibowitz said as he told Israel Television he would refuse the prize.

Dr. Leibowitz, a doctor of medicine and philosophy, said he had expected public outrage over the award but not that it would take "such a scandalous turn."

Dr. Leibowitz has been controversial for publicly decrying Israel's military rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip ever since their seizure in the 1967 war.

The Israel prize is an annual award for life achievement decided by a committee appointed under Education Minister Shulamit Aloni, of the liberal and left-wing Meretz Party.



Yeshayahu Leibowitz

also told the cabinet he would boycott the official presentation.

Dr. Leibowitz said he was surprised to be named for the prize but also taken aback by the furor it has stirred.

He noted he was outspokenly criticised the policies of every Israeli government since 1967 for "occupying the captured territories and ruling over people, or two million people who are deprived of civil and political rights."

Asked why he did not want to accept the prize, Dr. Leibowitz replied, "because this has raised such a public furor."

Croatia builds bridge, seeks deals with Gulf

ABU DHABI (R) — Croatia is seeking trade and investment with Gulf Arab states and has begun building a bridge, which it hopes will help restore trade and tourism, a minister said Sunday.

Minister of Trade and Tourism Branko Miksa, on a tour of Gulf states, told reporters that his delegation signed trade agreements with Oman, Yemen and Bahrain and was drafting a similar one with the United Arab Emirates.

The minister told reporters in Abu Dhabi that Croatia was seeking Gulf investment in its tourism sector, which he said earned between \$3 billion and \$5 billion before Croatia declared independence from the former Yugoslavia last year.

Mr. Miksa said Croatia has started building a pontoon bridge as a temporary substitute for the strategic Maslona bridge across a fjord linking the north and south Croatian coastline.

He said that construction companies Sunday began work on the pontoon or floating bridge which Croatia hoped would restore a crucial tourism and trade link once served by the Maslona bridge.

"The tourist season starts in May and we have to prepare everything and build the pontoon bridge, through which trucks will also have normal traffic," Mr. Miksa told reporters in Abu Dhabi, the last stop on his Gulf tour.

He said the pontoon bridge was crucial for the country to obtain international financing and credit lines.

"We have to ask for soft credits to pay for all these refugees," he said, adding the country was paying \$100 million per month for 750,000 refugees fleeing civil war in neighbouring Bosnia. "The guarantees for those credits is the future income from tourism."

Croatian forces shelled United Nations troops during a weekend strike against Krajina — a Serb-populated area of Croatia under protection of U.N. troops.

Croatia said the attack was launched to secure strategic ground to rebuild the vital Maslona bridge linking the Dalmatian coastal strip with northern Croatia.

Mr. Miksa said his country was privatising the tourism industry, with plans in two weeks to float 15 per cent of the shares in Zagreb's Intercontinental Hotel worth 20 million German marks.

Mr. Miksa's talks included inviting the regional carrier Gulf Air to use Croatia's capital Zagreb as a stopover to Europe.

Croatia, which imports 80 per cent of its oil, is also seeking direct oil import agreements with Gulf states, he said.

Algerian leadership strongarms young, noisy press

By Elaine Ganley
The Associated Press

ALGIERS — Military-backed rulers battling Islamic extremists have taken aim at Algeria's press, muzzling journalists with new laws, intimidation and imprisonment.

What may be the liveliest press in the Arab World — diverse, noisy and mischievous — risks losing its young voice.

Since mid-1992, 10 newspapers have been suspended for varying periods, on charges ranging from printing erroneous information to publishing the truth "prematurely."

Newspapers that had supported the now-banned fundamentalist party were shut down one by one.

"Attacks on freedom of expression are at the core of the military government's policy for suppressing the opposition," Article 19, a London-based organisation that campaigns against censorship,

wrote in December.

In the most notable case, six journalists from the French-language Al Watan, the largest independent daily, were imprisoned for seven days and indicted on some of the same charges used to convict Algeria's top fundamentalist leaders.

Masked security officers, waving revolvers and automatic rifles, burst into the newspaper on Jan. 2, said Tayeb Belghiche, one of the jailed journalists.

"When they came in, we thought they were going to stop the al capone band or the big terrorist chiefs," he said.

The six, including the paper's executive editor, were faulted for "prematurely printing information that seriously hindered the investigation of a crime."

The charge was made in connection with the murders of five policemen, apparently by Islamic extremists.

"The police told us: 'You are the terrorists' accom-

plishes," Mr. Belghiche said.

The paper was suspended from publishing for 12 days, but the six still face charges of divulging state secrets, compromising state security and attacking the morale of the army. The charges carry prison terms of up to 12 years.

The mounting problems between the press and the government follows a cozy relationship.

Approximately 20 newspapers were founded in 1990 after Algeria ended 28 years of one-party rule and adopted a constitution that established press freedoms.

All papers, French and Arabic, are published by the state printing houses, most advertising comes from state-controlled companies and many of the papers are lodged at the state-owned Maison de la Presse. Direct and indirect financial aid is customary.

Under those circumstances, it was natural that many papers remained close to the state.

That relationship was strengthened by the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, which many liberal Algerians feared.

At first, "the state aided the press and the press aided the state," said Hadji Khedoud, co-founder of the bi-monthly newsletter Algerie Confidential, printed in Geneva.

Newspapers supported the army-backed High State Council, installed a year ago to thwart the rise to power of Muslim fundamentalists. Then they found the crackdown on tending to their own new freedoms.

Government leaders, locked in an anti-terrorist campaign, "need only a vassal press that writes what they want," Mr. Khedoud said.

Prime Minister Belaid Abdoul Salam has assailed independent papers for "planting spies" to get information, using "underground" sources of financing and living off sensationalism.

Last week, in an unusual meeting with reporters, he said that in the current situation "a newspaper article has at least as much impact as a terrorist action" on public opinion, the official APS news agency reported.

An anti-terrorist law forbids publication of communiques by the now-banned Islamic Salvation Front or other "terrorist" groups; a presidential decree authorises closing down media for endangering public order; and new censorship laws impose an "embargo" on security-related information, which must be cleared by authorities.

The Al Watan affair was widely criticized by citizens and journalists here and abroad, signalling to leaders here just how deeply democratic notions are entrenched.

"People have seen that the press serves democracy... that it is the only thing left," said Ali Bahmane, editor-in-chief, Ali Bahmane.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
18:30 Michael Vaillant
18:30 La Famille Roudan
19:00 News in French
19:15 Reportage
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Perfect Strangers
21:10 The Dirtywater Dynasty
22:00 News in English
22:30 Prime Suspect

PRAYER TIMES

05:09 Fajr
06:29 Sunrise
11:43 Dhuhr
14:42 Asr
17:07 Maghreb
19:27 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church S.W. 10th, Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 62543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 622208
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811255
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932
Church of the Nazareth Tel. 675691
Church of the Redeemer ... Tel. 638526

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be partly cloudy and winds will be westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
Dr. Mohammad Shuqair 652693
Dr. Issam Al Asmar 693504
Dr. Ahmad Yousef 783384
Dr. Mohammad Imran 612332
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 773336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairosh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shuqair pharmacy 637660
Nairosh pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

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Nairosh pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 84

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Cabinet bans unsafe imports

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet has banned the import of plastic waste because of the health and environmental problems it causes when recycled. It has also banned the import of foldable diesel heater chimneys for safety reasons.

Senate to discuss draft laws

AMMAN (Petra) — The Upper House of Parliament (Senate) will meet Tuesday to discuss its Judiciary Committee's decision on the 1991 state security draft law and the 1990 economic crimes draft law.

Arabyat lauds outgoing Chinese envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabyat received at Parliament Monday Chinese ambassador to Jordan Zhang De Liang on the occasion of the end of his tour of duty in Jordan. The meeting reviewed Jordanian-Chinese relations. Dr. Arabyat underlined the importance of China's international role in economic, cultural and political fields. He thanked the ambassador for his efforts in promoting Sino-Jordanian relations and his country's understanding of Arab causes.

House committees to visit Arab parliaments

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament's Foreign Affairs and Palestinian Affairs committees met Monday under the Chairmanship of Deputy Taher Al Masri to discuss developments in the Palestinian expellees affair. The committees recommended that Jordanian parliamentary delegations be sent to Arab parliaments to coordinate their stands on the issue and work on guaranteeing the implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 799, which calls for returning the expellees to their homes in the occupied Arab territories. The first of these visits will be to the Syrian parliament, which chairs the current session of the Arab Parliamentary Union. A delegation will also be sent to the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

1st marine police force graduates

AQABA (Petra) — The first batch of marine police graduated Monday at marine command headquarters in Aqaba. Public Security Department (PSD) Major-General Fadel Ali Fuhaid attended the graduation ceremony and said the PSD would be working on developing the marine police force into a nucleus for a larger one. He said such a force will increase security in Aqaba and combat drug trafficking. The force includes 28 policemen who received training in physical fitness, swimming, rowing, and diving boats.

Post issues commemorative stamps

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Post and Communications will issue Tuesday the first commemorative stamps for 1993 under the motto "The International Customs Day." The issuance marks the celebrations of the Customs Cooperation Council member states of the International Customs Day on Jan. 26. These stamps, which will be sold at all post offices around the Kingdom, will be of two denominations: 80 fils and 125 fils.

Australian sheep tested

AQABA (J.T.) — On-board inspection of 34,000 Australian sheep, which recently arrived at Aqaba, is being conducted by veterinarians from the Ministry of Agriculture to check for diseases.

A statement by the Aqaba Port Authority (APA) said the sheep, imported by a local Jordanian firm, must meet the ministry's specifications and conditions before they can be off-loaded.

Dr. Assad Abul Ragheb, head of the inspection team, said the initial on-board tests will be followed by blood-testing at laboratories in Aqaba.

He said autopsies would be performed on a number of dead sheep found among the lot.

Follow-up observation and testing will continue at the port itself, where another team will weigh the sheep

and conduct spot tests on some, Dr. Ragheb said.

Australian embassy sources told the Jordan Times that since last November, about 29,000 sheep per month have been arriving in Jordan.

The shipments of livestock will continue through the end of March as agreed between Jordanian importers and the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation (AMLC) in a venture to secure a stable sheep market in Jordan and avoid any overflow.

Meanwhile, the joint Jordanian-Australian Economic and Trade Committee (JAETC) will meet in Canberra, Australia, during the last week of February to discuss trade prospects. The Jordanian team will be headed by Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensur.

Blood transfusions studied

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan is participating in a five-day workshop on reagents employed in blood transfusion procedures in the Near East.

Reagents are chemical substances used to cause a reaction, especially to detect other substances.

The workshop, organised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in cooperation with the Ministry of Health is addressing the classification of blood groups, safe blood, blood transfusions, and related topics.

Health Ministry representative Tawfiq Lubani told the opening session that the ministry's various departments, hospitals and blood banks take all the necessary precautions in blood quality control to avoid the spread of contagious diseases like hepatitis and AIDS during blood transfusions.

WHO representative Abdul Majid Abdul Hadi said that the Near East must attain self-reliance in providing sufficient supplies of blood and blood plasma.



Jordan relies heavily on blood donations from its citizens (File photo)

Production of locally-made reagents can help cootaries achieve this goal, Dr. Abdul Hadi said.

He said reagents should be

prepared in specialised laboratories to ensure the best results. Jordan has signed a regional plan for developing the blood transfusion process. It is being

implemented and financed by WHO and the Arab Gulf Programme for U.N. Development (AGPUND) and benefits nearly 32 million people.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arab press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition entitled "Latin American Countries in France" at the French Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition entitled "Modernist Still Life Photographed" at the

American Centre.

★ Exhibition entitled "Dhanna, a Village from South Jordan" displaying photos and other items on the village at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

★ German film entitled "Münchhausen" at 8 p.m. at the Goethe Institute (1943, English subtitled).

مكتبة الامم



Queen Noor talks to a Gaza Refugee Camp resident for the Rimoun Weaving Centre (Photo by George Crystal)

Queen visits project sites

AMMAN — Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday paid a follow-up visit to women handicraft income-generating projects implemented in the Jerash district by local groups with quality training and marketing assistance from Noor Al Hussein Foundation's (NHF) Jordan Design and Trade Centre (JDTC).

These projects seek to train women to produce quality Jordanian handicrafts capable of competing in national and international markets.

Her Majesty visited the Rimoun Weaving Centre where she watched production of room-size carpets with mosaic and Islamic calligraphy motifs designed by JDTC.

The Centre was established by NHF in 1992 in cooperation with the Rimoun Benevolent Society and with funding from the Jordan Development and Employment Fund (DEF) as well as the Canadian government to help improve the income and quality of life of women in the area.

It currently forms the nucleus for a larger training and production facility to serve neighbouring towns in the north.

At present, eight women work at the centre and eight others undergo training under the supervision of two weaving instructors. Twenty-five additional women and their families are expected to benefit from working at the centre in the next expansion phase, carrying on less than JD 60 monthly.

The Queen also visited the Gaza Refugee Camp where NHF has launched a spinning project in cooperation with the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and with funding from DEF.

Her Majesty visited families where home-based spinning takes place.

Twelve women are working at the projects centre while 34 others work at their homes.

The project produces spinned and raw wool for use by the Rimoun Weaving Centre, the

Jordan Design and Trade Centre and the Jerash Handicrafts Centre which was also called at by Her Majesty.

Established by the Jerash Ladies Benevolent Society, the centre produces embroidery, weaving and sewing works from which over 80 women benefit.

NHF's JDTC has provided the centre with technical marketing and design training.

Works produced by these centres have recently been exhibited at three major international shows in Frankfurt, Paris and Atlanta with impressive purchase orders received.

Four additional craft production centres in Mukhaibeb, Souf, Ramtha, and Ajloun are planned for by NHF.

Her Majesty was accompanied on her tour by member of the NHF Board of Trustees, Noor Izzedin, the NHF president, the NHF director general, the DEF director, the head of UNRWA office in Jordan, and Deputy Issa Rimouni.

Seminar rings alarm on creeping desertification
Participants debate who, what, how solutions

By Sa'eda Kilani

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In-depth studies and updated figures of Jordan's desertification problem were presented Monday at the start of a four-day seminar intended to alert decision-makers to the seriousness of the problem.

"One of the main objectives of this seminar is to make leaders and decision-making personalities more concerned with the desertification issue and its dimensions," said Munther Al Masri, secretary general of the Ministry of Education, in his opening speech.

"It (the seminar) must be able to motivate in-depth and serious thinking of the desertification problem and adopt ways to combat it and implement land reclamation."

Getting acquainted with the role of the individual in the desertification problem is another major objective of the seminar, said Ibrahim Musallam, director of the information section at the Ministry of Education.

"We must embark on the role of the individual in the deterioration of the situation on one hand, and the role he can play in putting an end to the desertification problem that threatens the land on the other," he said.

According to U.N. experts, 30 million square kilometres of arid and semi-arid land (20 per cent of the surface) directly are threatened with desertification.

According to Dr. Musallam, this phenomenon is increasing rapidly in the developing countries and is related partly to natural and climatic factors. "However, we can't rule out the role of the individual in bearing the responsibility of this environmental catastrophe," he said.

Desertification in Jordan, which reach 99 per cent of Jordanian lands at various degrees, said

Kamel Tadros of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Dr. Tadros said cultivable lands, which receive an annual average rainfall of 200 mm are exposed to further erosion if necessary measures are not taken to prevent it.

He also pointed to some practices, such as improper ploughing, unauthorised grazing and sporadic tree cutting that will eventually lead to the desertification of more lands.

Dr. Tadros said there is also the problem of improper use of modern cultivating equipment, such as tractors.

The construction boom has swallowed up about 15 to 20 per cent of the best cultivable lands in the country, he said. Jordan's low average rainfall of about 8,500 million cubic metres is depleted by 1,120 million cubic metres which are lost to evaporation, and 242 to ground water.

Deputy Muftir Bustanji emphasised that Jordan cannot afford losing much more water.

The inappropriate and extensive exploitation of water-basins has made the water saline, Dr. Bustanji said.

"More than 25 million cubic metres have been lost in the country's main basins (Al Jifra, Azraq, Daili). A comprehensive look should be given to the desertification problem and strategic plans should be drawn up to return to the natural equilibrium between land and water," he added.

While many lecturers share the view that the problem of desertification is mainly due to the rapid increase in population which leads to the transfer of agricultural land into residential areas, Hassan Abdul Qader, a professor at the University of Jordan, protesting the lack of content and precision in the lecturers' working papers, said the finger should be pointed to the real problem in-

stead of embarking on "unrealistic and emotional thinking."

"The root reasons of the problem should be extensively studied and supported by figures," he said during the discussion-hour. "Most of the papers lack factual information and are not in touch with reality."

Another participant, Yasin Al Zou'bi, voiced his complaint over the constant holding of seminars without addressing the direct person in charge.

"Who is the decision-maker that we have to address and convince of the importance of establishing dams," he questioned.

As to the situation in the occupied territories, Dr. Ahmad Abu Sheikha said the main things look at are the practices of the Israeli occupation authorities, especially the confiscation of Palestinian lands and the construction of Palestine as "Israeli territory."

"Since 1967 until 1990, around 2,896 million dunums (52 per cent) of land in the West Bank has been confiscated by the Israeli authorities," he said.

"They have exploited the Ottoman law and the emergency regulations to seize these lands in various ways."

Dr. Abu Sheikha pointed out that radical changes in the political, economic and social infrastructure of the territories is a direct result of Israel's practices, especially concerning water and the ban on Palestinians from using their own resources.

Deputy Mohammad Al Alawneh, a former Minister of Agriculture and the seminar's moderator, concluded that a national plan of development must be put into effect.

"While we were exporting wheat until the year 1973 and even in 1982, we are now importing it at more than 90 per cent for our needs; we must adopt a national plan of action," he said.

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UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
Established 1975

جورديان تايمز رويته عربية سياسية مستقلة منشورة بالانجليزية من المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية

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Hope of a way out

ISRAEL IS pinning high hopes on U.S. President Bill Clinton to thwart international efforts to impose sanctions on the Jewish state for continuing its defiance of U.N. Security Council Resolution 799, which condemns the expulsion of 415 Palestinians and calls for their return home. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is also deploying a juridical tactic to bolster his bid for more breathing space by appealing for Washington's patience till the Israeli high court of justice pronounces itself on the "legality" of the expulsion order.

Israeli Ambassador to Washington Zalman Shoval may be justified in expressing confidence that the new U.S. administration would preempt U.N. sanctions against Israel over the issue but he cannot be so presumptuous about Clinton's automatic acceptance of double standards when it comes to the implementation of U.N. resolutions. The new president has already demonstrated his eagerness to hold Iraq accountable for every alleged violation of Security Council resolutions even when the presumed Iraqi contraventions are inconsequential and marginal in comparison with Israel's long standing record on very critical and consequential U.N. resolutions. Why would he not do the same with Israel?

The ploy introduced by Rabin lately that there can be no interference with the juridical process in Israel, untenable as it is, may still save the day for both Clinton and the Israeli government. Should the supreme court in Israel rule that the forced and arbitrary expulsion of Palestinians is illegal or even lacking in legal justifications, however, Rabin can turn around and tell his people and the whole world that he is simply obeying the judicial decision of an Israeli court. There is now more hope, it seems, that that court will indeed order the return of a substantial number of those Palestinians who have been stranded in no-man's land under harsh conditions for over five weeks now.

Given the fact that the court was split when it sanctioned the expulsion of the alleged Hamas activists in the first place, and an expansion of the bench was resorted to in order to by-pass the division that occurred within judicial ranks over this issue, it would seem probable that when the court renders its final judgement by the end of the week it would do so with two objectives in mind. The first aim would be to restore the credibility and prestige of the Israeli judicial system that was seriously tarnished by its earlier precipitous verdict in support of the expulsion; and the other would be to avert the existing standoff between Israel and the international community over Israel's flagrant violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions. This scenario appears to be promising, but only if the new chief executive in the White House is willing to implement U.N. resolutions universally and in an evenhanded manner.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IRAQ'S UNILATERAL commitment to a ceasefire and Baghdad's continuous reaffirmation of its total commitment to end fighting serves as the only possible way for President Clinton to revise U.S.-Iraqi relations, said Al Rai Arabic daily Monday. President Clinton did not inherit Mr. Bush's enmity towards Iraq but rather a group of Bush's military and political officers who seem to be intent on maintaining strained ties between Baghdad and Washington, the paper said. It said that Iraq's refraining from returning the U.S. fire at present plus the Arab World's genuine aspirations towards a new chapter in Arab-American relations, should prompt the president to take the first step towards addressing the situation and ending the tragedy that has plagued this region of the world for so long. The Arab masses in general and the Iraqis in particular yearn for normal peaceful relations between the Americans and the Arabs and they pin hopes on the new president to take the first step towards attaining this goal, added the daily. The paper referred to President Clinton's earlier opposition to the war in Vietnam in the 1960s and said this should prompt the president to take a serious view towards ending world conflicts in line with the principles in which the American nation believes.

FOR ITS part, Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily said that the U.N. Security Council bears full responsibility for the continued U.S. attacks on Iraq. While the peoples of the Gulf and the Middle East regions look to peace, security and stability and pin hope on increased U.N. role in bringing about an end to conflicts, the U.S. continues to launch aggression on Iraq in a manner that is creating doubt about the U.N. credibility and its ability to fulfil the aspiration of the various nations, said the paper. It said that countries of the region which aligned themselves behind the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq are now questioning the wisdom behind the resumed raids on Iraqi territory. It said that the Arab masses are indignant over the resumed raids and are directing their anger towards the new U.S. administration and the United Nations. The paper cited a statement by the Omani minister of state for foreign affairs expressing his country's belief that the United Nations now stands impotent and can no more handle the Gulf crisis through quiet diplomacy. The paper said that as the U.N. remains passive against the U.S. raids, more and more nations around the world would be questioning its validity and credibility. The paper said that the United Nations should build on Iraq's unilateral ceasefire in order to bring about a comprehensive peace.

The View from Fourth Circle

Then, we shall have stability

By Rami G. Khouri

The observer who visits the Middle East today or follows its events from afar may be overwhelmed by the richness, variety and intensity of the dynamism and change taking place in almost all sectors of society, including the political, economic, social, and religious sectors. Our balance sheet of change is mixed, with some constructive developments (more pluralism, democratisation and economic realism) and some negative ones (continued militarism, violence, intolerance and autocracy in many countries).

I believe that almost all the trends and changes that characterise our region today can be explained as a series of conflicts or confrontations between forces that have struggled against one another for most of this century. They comprise the modern Arab World's still unsuccessful, yet continually dynamic, quest for a stable, authentic, and responsive political culture. The principal contests under way are the following:

1. The State vs. the individual: The creation of the modern Arab states around and immediately after 1920 resulted in a novel, disproportionate and unnatural transfer of economic and political power from individuals grouped in local communities to governments camped in capital cities. This change distorted the traditional balance between individuals/local communities and central governments/national armies that had pertained in the Middle East since the dawn of civilisation some five thousand years ago. That traditional balance had seen central governments have little direct, daily impact on the lives of individuals other than annual tax collection and the occasional need to conscript soldiers for defence purposes. Most people in the region today are trying to reduce the powers of central governments in favour of addressing the needs and rights of individuals and their traditional communities. This is the struggle of Arab democratic pluralism vs. the forces of oriental despotism and autocracy.

2. Individual countries vs. the region: The advent of 20, whimsically shaped and oddly-endowed Arab states in the post-1920 period also ran counter to the Middle East's history of strength through regional integration and intra-regional trade and resource complementarities. Today, some countries are trying to withdraw further into their own shells and to rely on foreign military support, while others are looking to achieve development, stability and security on the basis of greater regional integration. This is the struggle of Arab national identity vs. the forces that would transform some Arab states into neo-protectorates guarded by American, British and French troops.

3. The region vs. the West: Ever since Alexander the Great moved into the Middle East with his imperial armies in the 4th century BC, our area has suffered a long and troublesome sequence of unsatisfactory imperial relationships with the powers to our north and west. Usually we were the subject of their imperial greed, but sometimes we conquered them in moments of Arab/Islamic expansion. The net result has been a legacy of much mutual suspicion and fear, and frequent armed clashes, between the Arab/Islamic World and the Western/Occidental world. The struggle today by most Middle Easterners (Arabs, Iranians, and others) is to redefine the occidens/orientalis relationship in a more just and sustainable manner that respects the rights and

interests of all parties. This is the struggle between those who would end colonial audacity and those who would shelter under the false wings of yet another neocolonial adventure.

4. Civil vs. a religious order: A very large percentage, perhaps a small majority, of Arabs/Iranians/Muslims in this region seek a new political, social and economic order based on, emphatically, Islamic precepts. The Islamic religion is seen not only as a moral code and a source of spiritual identity and strength, but also as a blueprint for the configuration of the state and the inspiration for its day-to-day policies and programmes. Many others in this region reject the explicit Islamisation of state and society, preferring a civil society based on legal codes and social development principles derived from a broader heritage of Arabism, Islam, and international concepts and norms. This is the struggle between God and Caesar.

5. A domestic vs. a global focus for Arab/Islamic activism: The experience of the last five decades has convinced many Middle Easterners that we are more likely to achieve our aspirations if we concentrate on improving our own societies before trying to right the wrongs of the whole world. Therefore, the primary focus of movements of Middle Eastern political renewal and challenge during the last decade and a half (since the overthrow of the shah of Iran) has been on domestic restructuring. In the 1950s and 1960s, Arab/Islamic crowds took to the streets typically to denounce western imperialism and Zionist colonialism. In the 1980s and 1990s, Arabs/Muslims aim their anger and their activism at their domestic political systems and rulers, seeking to redress the mistakes of the past and to replace the failed autocracies of recent decades with democracies or theocracies that might better respond to the will of the people. Once our own societies are in order, productive, humane, and equitable — this line of thinking says — we can then move ahead to deal with the global and regional threats that plague us. This is the struggle between yesterday's romanticism and tomorrow's realism.

6. Sustained human development vs. national collapse: The pressures of population growth in a context of rising expectations, changing lifestyles and limited natural resources mean that many countries have lived far beyond their means and have borrowed heavily to plug the gap. This free ride came to an end in most Middle Eastern countries in the mid-1980s, and ever since we have been in the throes of deep economic restructuring. This battle for sustainable development underpins and drives all the other confrontations taking place in the region, because many people in many countries have reached a point of desperation vis-à-vis their chances of finding work, shelter and adequate food, and of anticipating a decent future for their children. Some Middle Eastern societies briefly lost this battle for sustainable development, due to their own greed, violence, or incompetence, and consequently they slipped into national destruction or catastrophe, with much human suffering and death (Somalia, Lebanon, Iraq, Kuwait, among others). This is the struggle between communal viability and collapse.

7. The individual vs. the tribe: This contest is closely related to several others, and its outcome will determine many of the other

battles now taking place. The West wants us to copy its criteria of life as means of satisfying individual needs and desires through production, consumption and a political/legal/moral system based on the primacy of individualism. We prefer to work for an individual's rights and aspirations through the collective mechanism of the family and the tribe — the tribe being loosely defined as the collective social group to which an individual naturally belongs on the basis of religion, national identity, ethnicity, blood ties, geographical proximity, economic interests, or linguistic affiliation, or a combination of the above. Occidental modernism, urbanism, consumerism and industrialisation tend to push us towards the cult of the individual, while oriental traditionalism, patriarchy and communalism tend to push us towards the safety of the tribe. This is the struggle between a selfish, inwardly-directed view of the world and a more humble, outwardly-directed view of the world — survival by the strength of "me" or by the comfort of "we".

8. The Arabs vs. the Israelis: This is one of the oldest confrontations in the area (soon to be one-hundred years old), yet it is almost secondary right now in the eyes of most people because of the primacy of the other struggles I mentioned above. In many ways, the Zionism/Israeli affront to the identity and integrity of this region is a cause of many of the distortions that have spawned these defining Middle Eastern struggles (distortions such as our exaggerated militarism, our concentration of power in the hands of the government, our lack of democracy and our propensity for lying, hero-worship, emotionalism and half-truths in both our private and government-owned media). In other ways, however, the Zionist affront simply accentuated defects that plagued us and distortions that hampered our coherent national development as states after 1920 (factors such as patriarchy and paternalism, tribalism, pan-Arab fragmentation, and dependence on foreign parties). Most Arab leaderships today seek a just peace with Israel, while most Arab people appear sceptical at best, and actively opposed to the peace process at worst. This is the struggle between coming to terms with the real world, and rejecting reality in favour of romanticism and emotionalism.

What is particularly fascinating about all of these confrontations and battles is that, in their present form, all are products of the post-1920 regional order, and all continue a legacy of struggle for identity, stability and dignity that has been waged by Arabs/Muslims in this region since the turn of the last century. The dominant external/internal dynamic we see at work today in the Middle East — western guns and political bombast combined with the fears of self-indulgent half-Arabs — will only aggravate these existing confrontations, and hasten the process by which the natural Arab/Islamic identity of this region will assert itself. Then, we shall have stability. Until then, we shall have only more confrontation and struggle, as nearly three hundred million Arabs and Muslims continue the national saga that has defined them and their families for the last five generations.

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Press and Publications Law — protection vs. restriction

By Maan Abu Nowar

Many, like this retired Jordanian, think that most of the vehement attacks on the new Press and Publications Draft Law, by the so-called "new press elite", were gratuitous, excessive and self-destructive. But, when the editor-in-chief of the Jordan Times, who enjoys quasi unlimited freedom of expression, joins the attack in the international media, that calls for attention.

In his "Two Cheers for Democracy", the English novelist E.M. Forster wrote: "So two cheers for democracy; one because it admits variety and two because it permits criticism. Two cheers are quite enough; there is no occasion to give three. Only love for the Beloved Republic deserves that."

Jordan deserves from her beloved sons better than an unjust attack on her good name. Why? Because the new publication draft law provides for a system, like that which exists in the U.S. and the United Kingdom, where liberty of expression is both protected and restricted by law. At this stage in the development of democracy in Jordan we cannot but emulate the systems of advanced nations, or else fall in the abyss of chaos.

Yes, there are no restrictions on the establishment of publications (newspapers, etc.) in the United Kingdom, but this is how men like Robert Maxwell, who was condemned after his death to be a trickster and a fraud who

even pinched the pensions of his staff, and Rupert Murdoch, who controls half of the British press, were able to influence British public opinion in favour of Zionism, to the detriment of both British and Arab interests. Would any Jordanian agree to allow some extremely rich Arab to buy all the press establishments of Jordan in one stroke of the pen? There are tens of thousands of very rich Arabs who can do just that for fun, while they could not care less about democracy. Indeed, they could do just that with the intention of assassinating democracy.

Yes, there are some restraints concerning the freedom of expression in the new draft law, but a reasonable and sensible Jordanian would want to compare them with those of the United Kingdom where modern freedom of expression was born. He will then find that all those restraints provided for in the new draft law are well established in British Common Law, though not in a particular press or publication law.

Let us study some samples of British Law. The British Law on defamation, like the Jordanian Publications Law, endeavours to resolve the conflict between the right to freedom of expression and the right of the individual to protect his honour, good name and reputation against attack by slander or

libel. It provides remedies for false expressions or statements which cause hatred, ridicule, contempt or special damage. Those who attack the Jordanian draft law should read the Law of Libel Amendment Act 1888, and the 1952 Defamation Act, and the restrictions on reporting judicial proceedings, to realise how liberal is the Jordanian law.

It is an offence in British common law to publish seditious libel or even to use seditious words. But the prosecution in cases of sedition must provide evidence that shows an intention to promote violence and disorder "over and above the strong criticism of public affairs."

It is an offence, under the 1934 Act, to endeavour maliciously or advisedly to seduce a member of the British Armed Forces from his "duty or allegiance."

Incitement to racial hatred is a criminal offence if it gives rise to a breach of the peace. The Obscenity Law of 1959 Act, the common law offence of conspiracy to corrupt public morals and other offences show how liberal the Jordanian Draft Press and Publication Law is.

The problem with the Jordanian law is that all these offences have been crowded in one law, while in the British system of law they are spread over all the areas of common law. If the articles of the Jordanian Publication Law

were distributed to the laws of trade and industry, the journalist union law, labour law, civil law, criminal and punishment law, only a handful, if any, of very brief articles would remain in the publication draft law, that is if they are really needed.

However, the draft law, by any standard, contains a waffle here and a waffle there, even in terms of classical Arabic as can be seen from Article (44):

"It is prohibited on every owner of a published newspaper, its chief editor, director of editing, any editor of it, any correspondent of it, and any writer accustomed to writing in it, to receive or accept as the owner of that publication, or as an employee at it, or by his profession, or by reason of it, or by the process of it, or by his connection with it, or for it, from any local or foreign source, any aid or financial gift."

Particularly in article (8) and (9), there are prolonged phrases which invite confusion, different interpretations, and certain ambiguities.

It remains to say that there is no perfect law, because laws are made by humans, political human beings, who have different attitudes and interests. The draft law is now in Majlis Al Aayan (Senate), and it is for their wisdom and experience to decide its approval. Even if it is approved by them, the last word is for the

Sovereign, His Majesty the King. From now until then those who oppose the draft law can have their chance to convince the rest of us Jordanians, not the rest of the world, that they are right, or be convinced that the rest of us

are right. Only then we will all deserve the "third cheer."

The writer is an historian and former minister of information. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

LETTERS

Countering 'attacks'

To the Editor:

I note that in a letter published by the Jordan Times on Jan. 25, 1993, the charge d'affaires of the embassy of Pakistan in Amman has made accusations that India violated human rights in an incident which occurred in Sopore, Kashmir.

As usual, Pakistan has distorted the facts and drawn wrong conclusions. The incident in Sopore took place because some miscreants, without provocation, fired at a patrol of the Border Security Force. The patrol returned the fire and in this exchange a building in this town was set ablaze. This building contained large quantities of explosives and ammunition which exploded.

While investigations are in progress, it would not be too fanciful to presume that the ammunition and the explosives were provided by Pakistan. This presumption is based on the fact that Pakistan has been motivating, training and infiltrating armed subversives into the Indian states of Kashmir and Punjab for the last several years with the aim of dismembering India. Facts regarding the training camps set up by Pakistan have been conveyed to friendly governments by the Indian authorities and, recently, the American government was considering the question of placing Pakistan on the list of countries which officially support terrorism. This year, Pakistan failed to achieve this distinction. However, it is possible that with their track record they will achieve this honour soon and become known world-wide as a state officially sponsoring terrorism.

The letter from the Pakistan embassy suggests that all nations and individuals should condemn India for "repression and violation of human rights." May I point out that the Jordan Times of the very same day on which the letter from the Pakistan embassy has been published carries a news item regarding two explosions that occurred in the Pakistani city of Hyderabad, Sindh. The news item indicates that at least 100 people were injured because of this blast and that these bombs were the work of freedom fighters who belong to the Jeay Sindh, which is seeking to liberate the Sindh province from Pakistan.

Obviously, the record of Pakistani violations of human rights has now intensified in Sindh also; it was a similar record of violation of human rights which led to the breaking up of Pakistan in 1971 when the majority province then called East Pakistan severed its links with the military authorities which had ruled Pakistan for decades. I would suggest that the pot should stop calling the kettle black.

I have been constrained to write the above lines because the Pakistan embassy has, unfortunately, chosen to use the media of a friendly country like Jordan to unnecessarily attack India. Since you decided to publish the letter from the Pakistan embassy, I would be grateful if my reply is also published and given equal publicity. As far as we are concerned, we do not wish to enter into a war of words with the Pakistan embassy in Amman. However, if they choose to indulge in this pastime, they will not find us idle.

Ishtwar Prasad,
Counsellor,
Indian embassy,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Palestinians take dim view of Israeli High Court

By Marjorie Oster
Reuter

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — Palestinian lawyers say justice will not really be served even if the Israeli High Court upholds a challenge of Israel's expulsion of 415 Palestinians.

"People are mistaken if they think the High Court is a good recourse for Palestinians," Palestinian Lawyer Jonathan Kuttab said.

"They never say deportation is illegal. They just say you have to follow certain procedures that give people an opportunity to appeal," he said.

Avigdor Feldman, an Israeli civil rights lawyer representing the deportees, said the government decision to banish them had stripped Palestinians under occupation of even the minimal rights which courts previously protected.

Palestinian lawyers view a High Court ruling, due later this week on the legality of the Dec. 17 expulsions, as mere "window dressing" for a blatantly illegal

action.

The court has overturned only one of hundreds of deportations since Israel's 1967 occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, home to 1.75 million Palestinians.

The U.N. Security Council called the expulsions a violation of the Geneva Convention on Treatment of Civilians in occupied territory. The convention, prompted by atrocities of World War II, bans deportations.

Lawyers for the deportees sought to overturn the government decision on grounds it violated international law. But their best hopes are in arguments that standard procedures were ignored.

"The High Court has said unequivocally that deportation without a hearing is illegal," said Mr. Feldman.

The 415 Palestinians, linked by Israel to militant Islamic groups responsible for attacks on its soldiers, were taken blindfolded and bound to a no man's land in South Lebanon without a hearing.

The seven-judge court has

given the government until Monday to explain what provisions will be made for the deportees — now stranded in an icy makeshift tent camp — to be present at their hearings and talk with their lawyers.

Mr. Feldman argued this was the first time Israel had carried out a mass expulsion, banishing people who did not clearly have leadership status, and he said evidence was not brought against each individual.

Attorney General Yosef Harish, defending the expulsions, told the court the government wanted to deport as many people as possible to create a deterrent effect.

"This is the first time the government says we are deporting on the basis of the number of people...Deportations in the past were always based on individual threat. Such an act was never justified by the collective deterrent," Mr. Feldman told Reuters.

He said he would consider it a victory if the court returned the deportees for a hearing — even if they were then deported again.

Lawyers for the men recall a 1980 High Court precedent by which two Palestinians deported to Jordan had to be returned to face a court hearing. They were — and then expelled again immediately afterwards.

Israel's judiciary has rarely rejected an executive decision justified by a sweeping definition of security needs.

"Whenever there is a security claim, that is overriding. There has never been a case when the Israeli High Court weighed the security of the state against individual rights and ruled in favour of the latter," Mr. Kuttab said.

Chief of Staff Ehud Barak, who appeared before the court to defend the expulsions, said security would be harmed if Israel took back the deportees.

On Saturday, British military helicopters returned to Israel 13 deportees whom it said were expelled by mistake.

Most were bundled off to Ketziot, a desert detention camp in southern Israel. The rest, including two men to be released after questioning, were jailed.

Iraq seeks no quarrel with U.S.

(Continued from page 1)

a whole region and vis-a-vis Iraq, in an objective, professional, neutral manner, from the very beginning of the interest of the United States of America, not from personal anger as the previous administration did," he said.

He suggested that both the West and the Arab World needed Iraq as a counterbalance against revolutionary Iran, but he stressed: "We are not offering ourselves as proxies of the West to work for their own interests against Iran."

He said Iraq was a neighbouring country with which Iraq could have good relations, but added that the Iran's expansionist policies prevented an improvement in ties.

He said Iraq was acquiring more arms than it needed, and could become a threat to the region.

"If the balance of power in the region is crippled, as it has been by weakening Iraq, then others are to weigh the balance of power vis-a-vis Iran," Mr. Aziz said.

Iraq, he said, was the only country which could do so, because the United States and the West were unprepared to go to war with Iran.

Mr. Aziz said "many, many countries in the region, in Europe and in other regions in the world" had approached Iraq to stress they wanted good ties with Baghdad.

He said they were waiting for the "American hammer" to be lifted.

"Why shouldn't they resume their relations with Iraq," Mr. Aziz said. "Iraq is a rich country and Iraq has proved that it is a very good partner in business."

President Saddam had talks with the commander of his air force and air defences Monday, he second successive day that they had met.

The Iraqi News Agency INA said simply that President Saddam and Air Marshal Muzahim Saib Al Hassan had met. It did not elaborate.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, in an interview published Monday, urged President Saddam to step down for the good of his people.

Mr. Mubarak told the German news magazine Der Spiegel that President Saddam's military "adventures" had ruined Iraq's economy by isolating the country under the United Nations trade embargo.

"If the good of his people really mattered to him, he would have to give up power," Mr. Mubarak said in an interview

conducted in his Cairo office. Mr. Mubarak, who helped the United States assemble the coalition that drove Iraq out of Kuwait in the 1991 Gulf war, blamed President Saddam for renewed tensions that have led to allied air strikes against Iraq.

"Iraq is ruined... despite this, the Iraqi president hurls himself into senseless adventures," Mr. Mubarak said.

"We regret that his irresponsible action has again led to the use of force."

Mr. Mubarak said President Saddam's arms build-up and the Gulf war, which left Iraq cut off from world trade by the U.N. embargo, had wrecked Iraq's oil-rich economy.

"The (U.N.) boycott will be maintained as long as this regime rules in Baghdad," the Egyptian president said.

"The Iraqi people must decide about Saddam," he added.

Mr. Mubarak accused President Saddam of being obsessed with the quest for power and said Arab leaders understood the Iraqi president.

"He should go, after the chain of catastrophes that have afflicted that country — so the Iraqis can come to life again and the world can re-establish contact with them," he said.

A top U.N. inspector said Monday Iraq had turned over a list of most of the foreign suppliers for its nuclear weapons programme after months of stalling.

Maurizio Zifferero, deputy chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said Iraq submitted what it said was a list of 90 per cent of the foreign suppliers and agreed to answer questions about the list.

"As usual, we will press them" for the remainder, Mr. Zifferero said of the disclosure that has been a central U.N. demand.

But Tim Trevan, a spokesman for the U.N. special commission overseeing the weapons inspections, said at U.N. headquarters that if the list is not 100 per cent complete, Iraq is not in compliance.

Mr. Zifferero's eight-man team of nuclear experts and a team of ballistic weapons inspectors arrived Monday.

Their treatment by the Iraqi government is considered a test of Baghdad's compliance with Gulf war ceasefire terms and its attitude towards U.N. teams.

Iraq had maintained that turning over the list of suppliers would violate its sovereignty over trading relationships. That is the argument it repeatedly cited when denying information on suppliers to the U.N. special commission.

Arafat challenges Rabin to be 'brave'

(Continued from page 1)

their five-year-old intifada.

"I can rely on U.N. resolutions, the whole world will be with me, and I can rely on the intifada," he told Reuters. "But America strips us of the weapon of international resolutions, the weapon of an international conference and the weapon of the intifada that is the biggest trap you can fall into."

The PFLP is one of the biggest groups in the PLO opposed to Mr. Arafat's policy of support for his peace talks.

Dr. Habash, chief ideologist of the Arab nationalism which swept the Middle East in the 1950s and 1960s but has since been swamped by pro-Western pragmatism and a wave of Islamic radicalism, said there should be peace talks but not on the terms set by the United States.

He said a requirement that the Palestinians should not start negotiations on the final status of the West Bank and Gaza until three years into an interim period of self-rule in the territories could end the intifada.

"In practice, the intifada would stop either because Israel would take that a condition or because under self-rule, Palestinians could be responsible for police and security so the intifada would stop," Dr. Habash argued.

Looking in good health for a man who has had two strokes, he added: "Once that happens, what happens to the Palestinians and the PLO have to continue the struggle? The issue is one of a balance of forces."

Dr. Habash said the terms of

reference for the present talks spoke only of the "political rights" of the Palestinians while U.N. resolutions affirmed the Palestinians' right to self-determination — which meant an independent state.

Dr. Habash said his alternative to the present peace process was "another peace process." He said this should be based on an international conference at which U.N. Security Council members sympathetic to the Palestinians such as China, Russia, Britain and France would ensure that the United States did not impose its will.

Dr. Habash said he still believed the best way to solve the Palestinian problem was for Jews and Arabs to form a single democratic state in the whole area of mandate Palestine.

But he added that this was not realistic at present and "the temporary solution is the U.N. resolutions which give us our right to establish a state."

Dr. Habash said the PFLP's alliance with two Islamic movements opposed to any recognition of Israel — Hamas and Islamic Jihad — was based on a common opposition to the current peace talks.

"What matters now is to make the American plan fail. Then the United Nations will have to deal with the Palestinian issue. When that happens, world opinion will support us, not Jihad or Hamas. It will say the realistic solution at this stage is based on the decisions of international legitimacy," he said.

Israel: Evictees will have 'legal' rights

(Continued from page 1)

r. Rabin said.

In a statement submitted to the court, attorney general Yosef Harish said the evictees could be able to meet once with lawyers or lawyers near the tent so they can determine whether they want to appeal the position order.

Once an expellee has decided would appeal, further meetings with his representative will be permitted, Mr. Harish wrote.

Israel will also review the cases of those expellees who decide to appeal, the attorney general wrote. The Palestinians were

expelled in great haste, and Israel has acknowledged that 16 were expelled in error.

Civil rights attorneys have argued before the court that the evictees were denied their right to due process because they were not given a chance to appeal.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres discussed the expulsions Monday with Mr. Solana and Hans-Juergen Wischnewski, head of the Middle East Committee of the Socialist International.

Mr. Peres has repeatedly said Israel did not seek confrontation with the United Nations, and that it would be ready to make more "humanitarian" gestures to the evictees.

Clinton and oil — some see interesting times

By Nicholas Moore
Reuters

LONDON — Bill Clinton's U.S. presidency may mark a period of change for world oil during which prices could take some wild swings.

"Things in the oil market are coming to the boil," says Mehdi Varzi, who follows the petroleum industry for London-based Kleinwort Benson Securities.

One immediate concern is whether a deal may eventually be struck to return Iraqi exports to an already saturated market.

The new Democrat administration also says the U.S., which burns 25 per cent of world oil, should cut petroleum imports.

Elsewhere, cash-pinched governments mull the idea of carbon taxes on fossil fuels — also ringing alarm bells in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Oil demand is flat in the recession-hit global economy. But it might rebound suddenly if Mr. Clinton can promote a U.S. recovery.

Western diplomats said it would not be out of character for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to follow up his ceasefire offer to U.S.-led allies with new efforts to sell his oil.

Iraq might try to meet more of the conditions set for the removal, or partial lifting, of the embargo which the United Nations imposed when it invaded Kuwait in 1990.

Geoff Pyne, an energy economist with UBS-Phillips and Drew, says Iraq could quickly sell 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd).

He also thinks the Iraq issue will "get an airing" in coming weeks which won't help prices, already down 20 per cent since October under a present excess of OPEC supply.

If Iraq were actually allowed back it could take prices lower by \$2-3 per barrel.

But Mr. Pyne and others doubt if Iraq will quickly convince Mr. Clinton of its readiness to abide by U.N. Gulf war ceasefire resolutions.

"We expect full compliance

with all the requirements of the U.N. resolutions," says Mr. Clinton spokesman George Stephanopoulos.

Gulf-based oil industry analysts say Saudi Arabia also does not seem too worried about Iraq, although it is focused on the need for prompt OPEC action to curb supply and rescue prices.

The Gulf analysts speculated that OPEC, meeting on February 13, may try to cap its April-June output at around 24 million barrels per day — down a million from current levels.

But Mr. Varzi at Kleinwort Benson still thinks OPEC is in danger of drift, with no coherent strategy. He even wonders if Iraq's return to the market might be the shock therapy which it needs if it is to address a threat of recurrent glut in the 1990s.

Mr. Clinton's choice for U.S. energy secretary, Hazel O'Leary, has said she opposes taxes to cut reliance on foreign oil now.

But Ms. O'Leary favours measures to increase energy efficiency and burn more gas, concerned

that oil accounts for 65 per cent of the burdensome U.S. deficit.

Mr. Varzi said: "OPEC may be missing the big picture. The global economy is weak. The U.S. is talking about reducing imports. Other governments in a recession will be tempted to put environmental taxes on fossil fuels to help meet their deficits."

The OPEC target, for instance, is a \$21 oil price. Yet in 1992, even without Iraq, the average oil price actually fell, to \$18.41 from \$18.66 in 1991.

OPEC could, however, react to persistent weak oil demand and the risk of western measures that might further curb consumption by adopting the policies closer to those that used to be advocated by its traditional pricing "hawks" led by Iran.

The OPEC militants favoured a really tight choke on supply to ratchet prices up, which would reverse the Saudi-led strategy of the 1980s of maximising revenue by pushing extra volume and letting prices stay fairly soft.



Team approach raises output - expert

By M. C. Jaspersen

WASHINGTON — Treat all of your employees as part of a team, and your production may soar while your costs decline, says an American personnel expert.

"I think there are a lot of ways you can break down the barriers" between management and the work force, Ronald Pilenzo, president of Personnel Decisions' International Division, said in a WorldNet "Dialogue" television broadcast last month.

That, he added, is what personnel experts are discovering may be essential to a healthy company. Mr. Pilenzo said during the USA-sponsored dialogue with Madras and New Delhi.

In discussing what a country such as India — which is striving to make massive economic reforms and strengthen development and trade — can do to improve its competitive edge industrially, Mr. Pilenzo shared some of what American firms have learned about human resources management.

Once these barriers are removed, "as everyone in the organisation realises that they are the company, I think that a lot of the problems that some people have with the so-called 'status-related syndrome' will disappear," Mr. Pilenzo said.

"People who — in the past — have been considered to be non-management people, did not necessarily share in the same proceeds, or same reward systems as did management people."

Now, Mr. Pilenzo said, "new schemes are being developed, like profit-sharing plans" and personnel are becoming more in-

volved in their companies, because they "share in the rewards" of increased production.

Another example of a way to "break down the barriers between the blue-collar workers and the white-collar workers," between production workers and management, Mr. Pilenzo said, is to eliminate the time clock.

Mr. Pilenzo explained that management's long-standing policy of requiring employees to punch a time clock or otherwise record their arrivals and departures to the exact minute, "is basically an act of mistrust, when you come right down to it."

Another way to encourage workers' involvement in the corporation is by "being more flexible: companies are putting their production workers on a salaries payroll (just as their managers are paid) which means 'We're all the same,'" Mr. Pilenzo said.

He noted that many companies, in further efforts to enhance the "collaborative process," are eliminating reserved company parking spots and "executive" dining rooms, no longer segregating their employees from managers at lunchtime.

Mr. Pilenzo also said that it is extremely important that companies begin to train or develop their human resources for the long term. In the past, corporations have done a poor job of orienting the person to both his tasks and the organisation as a whole.

Workers' career paths must be studied as a whole, and should incorporate "life-long learning," not just short-term learning, Mr. Pilenzo said.

In the United States, he added, there is an encroaching "dilem-

ma" about how to deal with the older worker. A corporation may want, when a fine career is winding down, to take that employee out of the field where he has spent such energy and developed tremendous expertise, and turn him to teaching the young.

Young workers, he explained, "are not willing to wait" in line for good corporate positions, as they have traditionally been. Corporations are obliged to keep these young, high-energy personnel interested, "motivated," or they will market their skills elsewhere, and the corporation will be the loser.

Asked about how to evaluate an employee's performance, Mr. Pilenzo said that that, too, has evolved greatly in the recent past. Now, new standards of achievement are built on the old, and there are measurable goals to judge these achievements.

Also, Mr. Pilenzo said, rather than the previous "parent-child" relationship, managers should be dealing with their employees on a "parent-parent" basis.

Personnel must receive "ongoing feedback," so that there are no surprises when their performance is reviewed.

Above all, Mr. Pilenzo said, change will not happen unless people want it, and see why it is needed. He added that it is also a very good idea to reward change when it happens.

And the human-relations specialist advised that cultural values, morals and ethics, "not just the bottom line" or profits, are extremely important, as a "corporation has a responsibility to the community as well as to the individual" — United States Information Agency.

Little hope for forgotten Palestinian refugees

By Deborah Pugh

Just inside Egypt, not far from the Rafah border post with Israel, there is an encampment of low shelters — a collection of branches, plastic and cardboard — giving scant protection, against the chilling wind and rain of the north Sinai coast.

In one of them, coaxing a fire to heat water for tea, sits Tenkiya Saleem, so wrinkled and bent with age that it is impossible to tell how old she is.

"We are Palestinians, I was born near Beersheba. We fled to Gaza during the first (1948) war, and now we wait here to rejoin our families in Gaza," she says, adding that she would like a proper bedouin tent to replace her shelter.

The Salems are members of the now destitute Malakha tribe, part of the 1,200 Bedouin left behind in Egypt. Othman Saleem, "Tenkiya's grandson, says the Israelis forced them to leave their grazing land in the Gaza Strip for the Sinai two months before Israel withdrew from the Egyptian territory in 1982.

Other sources say some bedouins were already in the Sinai and were not told that the Camp David peace treaty would cut their grazing area in two and that they should return to Gaza or be stranded, stateless.

There is little chance that Tenkiya will ever see her family in Gaza again. The Israelis have,

never recognised any obligation to allow their return and the Egyptian foreign ministry said it was not aware of their existence. The failure of officialdom to recognise the bedouins is not surprising. Bedouins have rarely been accepted as full citizens by any state in the Middle East.

Yet it is irrefutable that these bedouins, now numbering more than 1,000, are Palestinian refugees. Most hold identity cards issued by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) as proof that they were first made refugees in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war.

To save money, UNRWA cut off their rations in 1985. These basic provisions, partly funded by the Islamic Development Bank, still sustain more than 3,000 non-bedouin Palestinian refugees who live nearby in Camp Amman and who were relocated by Israel into Sinai in the early 1970s when the Israelis controlled the peninsula.

But the bedouins were not mentioned in the Camp David agreement under which Israel agreed to accept the Camp David residents on the condition that Egypt pay for their new houses in Gaza. Even the process for this recognised group has been agonisingly slow.

"UNRWA thought the repatriation process would be finished quickly, but in 10 years we have only managed to return a quarter of the families from the camp. In 1992 they received no funds at all from the Egyptian authorities to return," Ron Wilkinson, of UNRWA's Cairo office, says.

Like their bedouin cousins, Camp Amman residents are forbidden to work and are under the strict scrutiny of the Egyptian interior ministry. It holds 1-2 Palestinians from the camp in prison without charge or trial and in contravention of numerous court orders calling for their release. But they have a legal existence and some kind of future.

The Malakha have little chance of survival. If they were allowed to continue their nomadic existence, it is unlikely they would be in difficulties. But their grazing grounds have been constricted by booming agriculture and tourism in North Sinai — a by-product of peace with Israel.

With the loss of income from relatives working in the Gulf, their conditions are dire, forcing the tribe's leader, Sheikh Abu Sater, to petition UNRWA for help.

"Each time UNRWA distributes food at Camp Amman my people say we should go and demand food, we are refugees too. But I say now, we can only solve this by discussion. If we make trouble it will only mean that Egyptian security steps in," he says — The Guardian.

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India offers lucrative investment chances

By T.N. Ashok

THE INVESTMENT climate in India has brightened up in the last few years, more so in the last few months with new economic reforms unleashed by the government headed by Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao.

There was a time when foreign investors shied away from India mainly because of a plethora of controls, regulations and bureaucratic delays that dampened all enthusiasm to invest, especially when the cardinal principle of good business is: time, time is of the essence in all business deals.

But all that is now a thing of the past.

The way India has opened up in the last few months through its deregulation drive and incentives for foreign investors in almost all infrastructure industries is something that many international firms have just been waiting for.

Though a trifle late, it is still better late than never to unfold new schemes to woo foreign investors. But still India is nowhere near its neighbour China, which has opened up dramatically from a closed door communist state into a typical laissez faire economy. China today boasts of an annual inflow of foreign investment of about \$35 billion. Taiwan, often referred to as the booming China, has an annual inflow of about \$70 billion as foreign investment. South Korea, Singapore and other Asian countries are still far ahead of India having got into the race for investment much earlier.

Nothing is however lost. The liberalisation of the economy through a series of fiscal measures, loosening grips on controls, rationalising conditions for investment et al have made a definite impact. Evidence can be seen in the form of interest shown by foreign investors in key sectors like power, petroleum and natural gas, industrial sector, garments shipping, and even food processing.

India initiated the major programme of economic reform and ordered its restructuring embracing virtually every area of economic activity trade, money and finance, exchange rates, tax laws and investment policies.

Streamlining of procedures, deregulation, delicensing, automatic approvals for foreign investments in a wide area of economic activities and opening up of new areas of investment for private sector are the major highlights of the policy.

The major thrust of these economic reforms is to enable the Indian industry forge ahead a more dynamic relationship with foreign investors and suppliers of technology.

Recognising the fast changing global scenario, where strategic alliances are the order of the day, case by case approvals and 40 per cent equity limits were abolished. This aims at integrating Indian into the global economy.

It may be recalled that some years ago the equity formula was a major deterrent for foreign investment in India and many of the multinationals had been demanding that the Indian equity in foreign companies be diluted and correspondingly foreign equity be raised.

The government also drew up a list of 34 areas of economic activity which were classified as high priority industries.

For anyone wishing to invest in these areas, automatic approvals would be given. No permission was however required if the foreign investment did not exceed 51 per cent. For higher equity holding foreign investors would be required to seek permission. In the power sector 100 per cent foreign equity has been allowed.

Firms would have to finance their capital equipment imports out of the foreign equity stake. In addition, 51 per cent foreign equity holdings in international trading houses, hotels, and other tourist related areas would also be welcomed.

Another major step for attracting foreign investment in India is the delinking of

foreign equity investment from transfer of technology. It is no longer necessary that foreign investment in a particular industry must be accompanied by technology transfer. Investment in any industry is permissible according to the prevalent norms.

Foreign technology agreements for industries on this list will also receive automatic approvals, if they conform to the guidelines.

Currently these guidelines allow royalties of up to five per cent of domestic sales and eight per cent of export sales. In addition, lumpsum technology payments of up to \$4,00,000 are allowed.

Other industries may avail of the automatic approval system for technology transfer if they can arrange to pay for it out of export earnings.

Export commitment is also applicable only to companies investing in the automatic approval category, which requires that repatriation of dividends for a period of seven years be balanced against net foreign exchange earnings. However, export commitment is generally not imposed on units not falling under this category.

In case a company decides to quit, or take the "exit decision" the overseas promoter can repatriate his share after discharging tax and other obligations. He can also disinvest his share either to his Indian partner, to another company or to the public.

Case by case approvals, for the hire of foreign technicians and testing of indigenously developed technology abroad, has also been abolished. No permission would be needed henceforth.

A specially empowered board has been constituted in the prime minister's office to negotiate directly with large international firms and approval of direct foreign investment in select areas.

The foreign investment promotion board is empowered to negotiate a proposal in its entirety and is not limited by any pre-determined

parameters or procedures. The objective of the FIPB is to attract substantial investments in high technology areas and to provide access to world markets.

As part of the industrial reforms to allow more foreign firms invest in India, government streamlined licensing procedures, simplified documentation and guaranteed quick clearances.

No licences at all would be required for industries except for a small list of eighteen sectors. These sectors relate to defence production, strategic concerns, alcohol, cigarettes, environmental or ecologically sensitive areas, hazardous chemicals, pharmaceuticals, entertainment, electronics and white goods. Projects in these areas would continue to require licensing.

Areas restricted previously to the public sector are now thrown upon to private investors. However, eight sectors which involve security and strategic concerns remain barred to the private sector. These include arms and ammunition, atomic energy, mining and railway transportation.

Controls on capacity and diversification have also been relaxed.

In the past, industry was subject to production limits on both quantity and types of products.

This was so because at that time it was essential to conserve scarce raw materials resources. But now it is felt that Indian industry can be allowed to develop at its own pace and market forces will determine the availability of its product range.

Any industry may manufacture of its existing production line any product that does not demand further capital investment.

For instance, if a truck manufacturing concern feels that jeeps, cars and even two wheelers can be manufactured within the existing framework it is free to enter these areas without approaching the government for clearances.

In yet another major step towards liberalising the economy, the government restricted the scope of the monopolies and restrictive trade practices act (MRTP).

No longer will threshold limits of assets be a negative factor in the growth of a company. In the past firms with assets above a certain size came under the MRTP act. They were allowed to invest in certain industries only.

These restrictions have now been abolished. Regardless of assets, all companies are now equal.

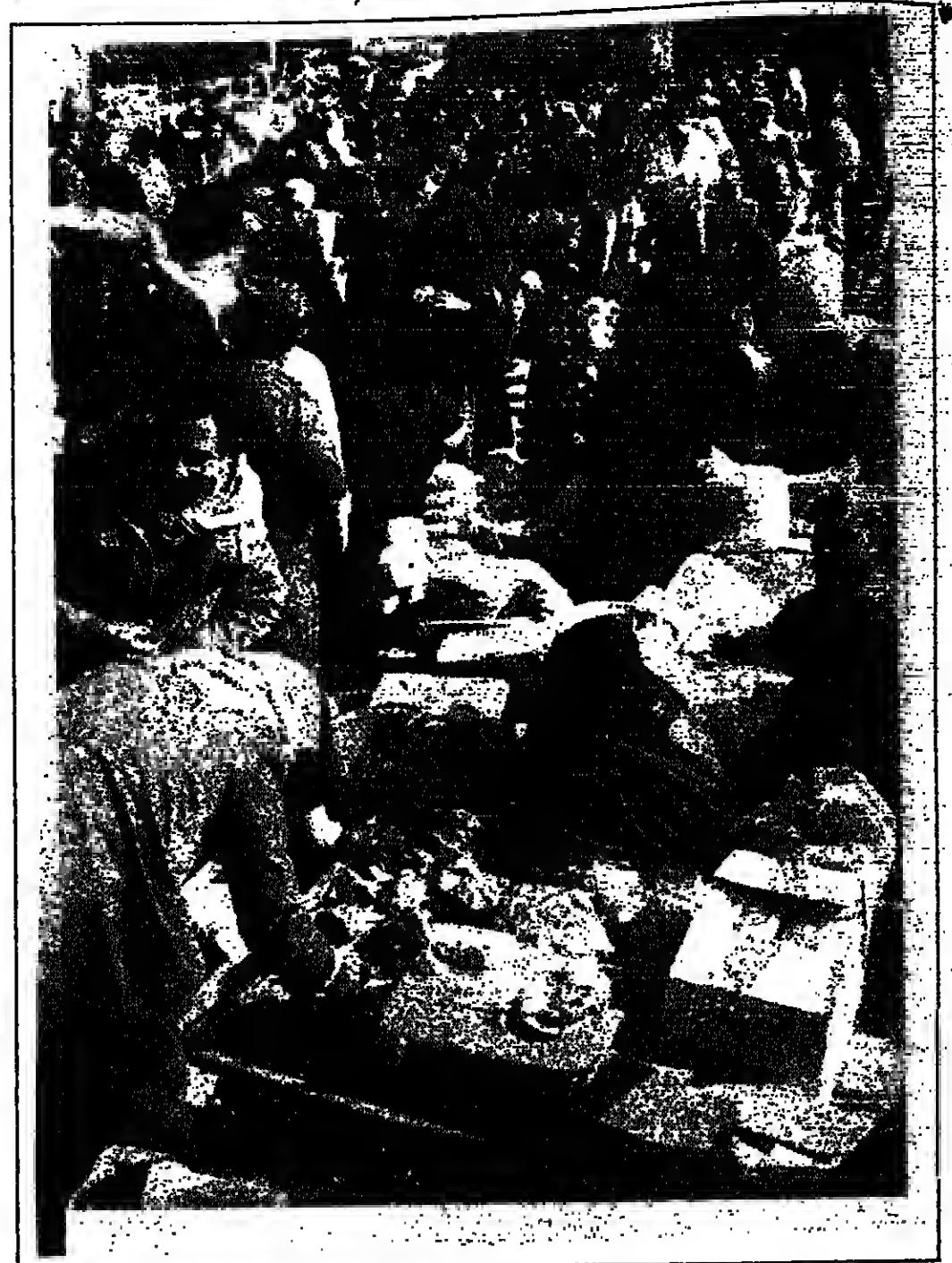
India devalued the rupee, albeit to strong objections from the opposition parties. The measure was essentially designed to check capital flight. With the rupee artificially overvalued, there was a tendency to take foreign currency out of the country and bank it abroad for greater returns. By guaranteeing greater rupee returns to foreign currencies like the much tradable U.S. dollar, it was possible to arrest this flow. Devaluation has also made exports more attractive. A major advantage was to check depletion of foreign exchange reserves.

Import duties were slashed on a number of commodities and raw materials for the industries and a number of items on the banned list were transferred to the open general licence. The idea was to prevent a tariff barrier from being built up that deterred foreign investors.

The entire exercise of liberalisation is to remove all obstacles for investment.

As Mr. Rao put it succinctly: "the government welcomes foreign direct investment to accelerate the tempo of development to upgrade technologies and promote exports. Obstacles that come in the way of receiving foreign investment on a sizeable scale would be removed."

The message of economic reform is very clear, India welcomes foreign investment. It also welcomes technical collaboration agreements — PTI



Sanctions have hit hard the Iraqis, but instinct is stronger and life must go on (AEP photo)

Little hope for forgotten Palestinian refugees

By Victoria Graham
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — As always, the men drink sweet, strong tea, smoke their waterpipes and play dominoes in the seedy Al Baghdad tea house on the Tigris River.

At garish nightclubs, dancers lock arms and hop about in time to Arab rock, waving prayer beads and ululating.

The markets sell carpets, garlands of dried figs, pungent spices and seeds. Envy and theft are problems in hard times, so the demand grows for blue ceramic charms and garled roots that ward off the evil eye.

As everywhere in times of scarcity, the second-hand trade is flourishing. Used clothing, shoes, furniture, toys, wedding China, books, even marriage beds are sold by people desperate for cash.

Two years after the Gulf war, this city of 3.5 million appears normal on the surface. The rhythms and rituals of life continue.

But U.N. sanctions have taken their toll, and the economic ordeal of daily life is dispiriting. The recent U.S. bombings, said to have claimed 46 lives, have increased the apprehension.

Seven-year-old Ahmad still awakens in a cold sweat, hearing thunder and seeing fire again in his nightmares, said his mother, Amira, who would not give her full name.

He shrieks, "no" and shields his face with his hands. His mother holds him in her lap, she said, murmuring soothing words from the Koran about peace and protection from evil.

"That makes him feel better, but inside there is fear in all of us now," said Amira, a stylish blonde woman who runs a small carpet shop, but has few customers.

Although Baghdad has been rebuilt and most signs of the Gulf war are gone, Amira said, there is an urgent, precarious quality to life.

One dinar used to buy 100 pieces of bread, but now buys only three. Amira and many other women now bake their own bread, when they can afford flour.

Some new damage has replaced the old: the opulent marble lobby of Al Rashid hotel, Baghdad's finest, was shattered when a stray Cruise missile smashed into the garden just outside. Two people were killed and 30 injured. A baby grand piano from the lounge tipped into the missile crater.

Weeping, wailing mourners filled the lobby for a state funeral and many cursed President Bush.

"When will the Americans leave us alone? When will they have pity on the Iraqi peoples?" asked Adnan Latif, a businessman. The anger was genuine and widespread in Baghdad, even though most people seem to like Americans.

Nearby, Mussini Ali Mohamad showed journalists photos of his three little girls, all hospitalised with wounds from flying glass. Their blood was smeared on the door to the kitchen, where they had run in panic.

"This is Bush's fault," he said. "My children's blood is on his hands. ... My home is filled with broken glass. My heart is angry."

Nonetheless, life goes on. Shortages abound, of everything from imported French perfumes to automobile tires. A tire that could be had for 18 to 100 dinars, now costs 4,000. One kilogramme of lamb, once 15 to 25 dinars, now is 60 to 75.

The official rate of 33 cents to the dinar means little. On the black market, a dollar buys up to 37 dinars.

Theft is on the rise. Taxi drivers are afraid to leave their parked cars, even briefly, for fear they will be stolen.

Sugar is scarce and sweet shops have closed. The few Iraqis who can afford it buy syrup made from homegrown dates and mix it with sesame paste.

Animals for sale at the Friday market in Suddoun street are scrawny. The "thieves market" which once overflowed with electronics, cameras and booty stolen from Kuwait, now has little to offer except used clothing.

Stores that sell chandeliers no longer bustle with the wealthy, and the clerks are idle.

Many stores of all kinds have closed because few imported goods are available. The government has forbidden imports of watches and other luxuries, declaring that people should spend their money on necessities.

There is no shortage of smuggled whisky or cigarettes and the elites of Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party, government and army do not suffer; Saddam Hussein has hiked the pay of party officials and the army by 40 per cent.

On River Street, a few Shiite Muslim women, draped in black, lingered outside a lingerie shop and pointed covetously at red lace trifles they could not afford.

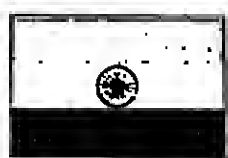
Baghdadis still go to the racetrack. Some say they even wager more in hopes of winning enough to help them through the hard times.

In the modern city built with petrodollars, little remains of exotic old Baghdad except the delicate, rotting wooden balconies of colonial days near Tigris River.

Its planners favoured high-rises and abstract murals of Arab legends. There is lots of sculpture, such as Ali Baba and the 40 thieves, and from the Iran-Iraq war, a statue of a "martyred" pilot and the wreckage of his aircraft.

The most prominent civic decorations are paintings of Saddam Hussein — in uniform, western suit, Arab robes; with a shovel, with a child on his knee.

Saddam watches, which were imported, are rare now, but jewelers offer to paste the leader's smiling visage on any watch.



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Indian leader pledges to
continue creative role

IN AN ADDRESS to the nation on the eve of the 44th Republic Day, the president of India, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma said: "The eyes of the world look upon us. The message of India to our neighbourhood and to the rest of the world has been and will be of peace, friendship and cooperation. We shall continue to play a vigilant and creative role in world affairs for the good of all humankind."

By H. Ramachandran

Only months ago it looked like a mirage. There was a pall of gloom. The sense of despondency was overbearing. From politics, the debate in India for the first time shifted to economy. The pocket had started pinching a little too hard. The figures spoke for themselves. When the Congress (I) government came to power in June 1991, the foreign exchange reserves had declined considerably despite the fact that the two previous governments had drawn up to \$2.4 billion from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) between July 1990 and January 1991. Foreign banks were not willing to extend new credits. Non-resident Indians were taking their money out at the rate of about Rs. 150 or 200 crores every week. But today, as a result of some quick macro-economic stabilisation efforts, the disaster, which was staring the country in the face, has been averted. The prophets of doom, who prophesied that India will not be able to raise its head in the global economic scene, have been proved wrong. India and its economy has been on the move since then. Now there is no looking back on the dynamic path undertaken to integrate the Indian economy with the international economy. This has been reiterated time and again by the prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, and the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh.

For the first time after 45 years of independence, India has made a concerted effort to globalise its economy. There has been a sea change in approach and attitude since the new government assumed office. The union budget for 1991-92, presented within weeks of the formation of the government, gave indication of the liberalised thinking. The 1992-93 union budget left no one in doubt. The steps taken to dismantle stifling controls, which discouraged large industrial houses and international investors, have already resulted in vastly changed impressions about India. The major strength and resilience of the Indian economy has been its domestic market spanning to 850 million people,

a viable agriculture sector and a growing industry. The root cause of the malaise in Indian economy has been the burgeoning fiscal deficit. After years of fiscal laxity, the 1991-92 union budget was used to initiate concrete measures to bring about fiscal discipline. The government believes that the key to control inflation and recessionary trends lies in pegging the fiscal deficit at manageable levels. In 1992-93, the fiscal deficit was pegged as promised at 6.5 per cent of the gross domestic product. The financial minister and top officials of the ministry are confident of bringing it down to five per cent of the GDP in the coming fiscal year.

To tackle recessionary trends, the government has over the months initiated a series of measures to open up the economy. These include subjecting the domestic market to competition, reduction of government control on economy, allowing private investment including direct foreign investment in almost all sectors, lowering of direct taxation rates, making the rupee partially convertible and drastically reducing the reserve list of industries and areas marked for the public sector. Most industries have been de-licensed. Several acts, which became impediments in growth, including the monopolies and restrictive trade practices act, have been repealed. Tariff barriers have also been considerably reduced.

The success of India's reform measures can be gauged from the strong support being extended by multilateral institutions like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank. India has already negotiated a \$2.2 billion stand by loan arrangement with the IMF and several tranches have already been drawn from it to refurbish the balance of payments position. Negotiations for a near six-billion-dollar loan from the IMF under the extended funding facility and the extended structural adjustment facility are about to begin. India's chances of getting the loan appear to be certain with both IMF and the World Bank lauding the reform programmes and certifying that the measures are on target.

As a result of the opening up of the economy, the stock market has registered a boom attracting bankers and investors from abroad. Several Wall Street firms are exploring the possibilities while merchant bankers and law firms specialising in the securities business have showed keenness to handle the rights issues of leading Indian companies, in European and American stock markets. The American bankers have also shown willingness to help the Euro-issues of Indian public sector companies. The International Finance Corporation is closely supporting the sale of Indian shares in western markets. One of the aberrations in recent years in India has been the multi-crore securities scam. Once the financial irregularities were detected the government acted swiftly and appointed a committee under the Reserve Bank of India Deputy Governor Mr. S. Janakiraman to go into it. Simultaneously, the Central Bureau of Investigation was asked to probe and conduct raids in the premises of leading stock brokers. A joint parliamentary committee was set up to inquire into it. Investigations are in progress. The government feels that this scam will not affect the reforms in any manner.

In a bold move, the government decided to allow up to 49 per cent foreign equity investment in its public sector units. This would enable the public sector to meet their foreign exchange requirements, especially for technology upgradation and expansion programmes. The government's objective is to raise Rs. 75 billion by 1995 through the sale of PUS shares.

In order to give a boost to exports, the government has come up with a five-year innovative export-import policy. In it, the negative list of exports and imports has been brought down to the smallest ever, the export promotion of capital goods scheme has been liberalised, export-oriented units have been allowed full convertibility of the rupee and the export processing zone scheme has been extended to agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry and other sectors. All procedures have been made simple and transparent.

Trade bodies are confident that the exports would be increased by 13 per cent in the current year.

India's aggregate exports in the first five months of the current financial year moved up by 4.68 per cent to \$6993.41 million from \$6685.75 million in the corresponding period last year. There has also been a significant improvement in the export performance to the general currency area. Exports to GCA are estimated at \$6,699.77 million in April to August this year as against \$6,038.35 million in the first five months of 1991-92 showing a growth rate of nearly 11 per cent.

The foreign exchange reserves, which had hit the rock bottom only two years ago, have increased to over Rs. 140 billion at the end of October. The sharp rise in reserves is being attributed to schemes like the foreign exchange remittances scheme and the India bonds, a sharp increase in remittances from abroad and higher tourism earnings.

As part of its strategy not to fall into a debt trap, the government has already sounded the alarm bell and put an internal cap of \$2.5 billion on external commercial borrowing. So far this year, such borrowings amounted to only \$1.6 billion and the finance ministry is confident of not overshooting the target.

Industrial production, which had slowed down a bit, is expected to pick up in the remaining months of the current year. An indicator of this is the sharp rise of over 30 per cent in the total loan disbursements by financial institutions in the first half of the current financial year.

Though the economy is not totally out of the woods, it has definitely started looking up, compared to last year. The government is confident of ending the year with about 3.5 to 4 per cent of GDP growth, against 2 per cent last year.

While having an overview of the Indian economy, it should not be forgotten that this is only the second year since the government launched its fiscal consolidation efforts and it might take one more year for the full benefits of the drastic reforms to be derived — Press Trust of India.



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Company**

**WISH
THE PEOPLE OF INDIA
A HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY
AFFIRMING JORDANIAN FRIENDSHIP
AND HOPES OF CONTINUED
PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY**

Edberg, Sampras advance in Australian Open

MELBOURNE (AP) — No. 2 seed Stefan Edberg conquered a back injury and Frenchman Arnaud Boetsch Monday and romped into the quarterfinals of the Australian Open tennis championship.

The two-time champion from Sweden defeated Boetsch 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 without extending himself.

"It was like a dream. I couldn't have gone any better," Edberg said. "Straight sets and only 1 1/2 hours was ideal. The last thing I wanted was a long match."

No. 3 Pete Sampras of the United States, No. 7 Petr Korda of the Czech Republic and No. 11 Guy Forget of France also advanced to final eight.

Monica Seles, seeking her third straight women's title, powered into the quarterfinals with a ruthlessly efficient 6-2, 6-0 victory over 13th seeded Frenchwoman Nathalie Tauziat.

Also advancing to the quarters were No. 5 Mary Joe Fernandez and No. 7 Jennifer Capriati, both of the United States.

Edberg pulled out of the doubles Sunday, saying he had a back spasm, and only decided shortly before the match with the unseeded Frenchman to go on court.

Edberg has twice before been forced by injury to pull out of the Open and has never won at the National Tennis Center, where the event moved five years ago.

Boetsch said Edberg had outplayed him, despite serving at

under full pace.

"He ate me up. I felt like a little boy," said Boetsch. "He played good. He didn't make so many mistakes."

Edberg next plays compatriot Christian Bergstrom in the quarters after Bergstrom beat 10th seeded South African Wayne Ferreira 6-4, 7-5, 2-6, 6-4.

Ferreira never got his power game working against Bergstrom, who upset No. 8 Ivan Lendl in the first round.

Bergstrom, ranked 62 and a Wimbledon quarterfinalist in 1990, used swift footwork and deft service returns to derail a wildly inconsistent Ferreira and delight dozens of raucous Swedish fans.

Sampras was treated for an ingrowing toenail during his match but was too composed and powerful for 13th seeded compatriot Maliv Washington. Sampras won 6-3, 6-4, 6-4, and served a dozen aces.

Sampras was treated for an ingrowing toenail during his match but was too composed and powerful for 13th seeded compatriot Maliv Washington. Sampras won 6-3, 6-4, 6-4, and served a dozen aces.

"I just wasn't able to do the things I wanted to do," Washington said. "He has a lot to back up his serve."

In an ominous warning to his rivals, Sampras said: "I feel pretty good. I'm getting better with each match."

Left-hander Korda completed a 7-5, 6-3, 6-1 win over surprising American qualifier Chris Garner. The match was halted by rain Sunday with Korda leading 3-0 in the third set.

Korda earned a quarterfinal meeting with defending champion Jim Courier, who beat Korda

da last year in the French Open final.

Forget ended the run of American qualifier Kelly Jones, winning 6-3, 7-6 (7-5), 7-6 (8-6). He next faces German Michael Stich.

Forget never has progressed further than the quarters in any Grand Slam but believes he is ready.

"Inside of me there is a little light that says: 'Why Not?'" said Forget. "I'd like to make that extra step."

Seles beat Tauziat in just 50 minutes with her fourth successive straight-sets victory.

Seles has conceded only eight games in the first four rounds of the tournament. She won 31 of 38 points at one stage against Tauziat and yielded only seven points in seven service games.

Seles has made it to the final of the last seven Grand Slam tournaments she has contested, winning six.

Julie Halard of France had considerably more success than Tauziat, upsetting No. 6 seed Conchita Martinez of Spain 6-4, 6-3.

Halard, ranked 29th, made the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam for the first time in 23 attempts.

Fernandez struggled by No. 9 Manuela Maleeva-Fragnier, of Switzerland 7-5, 2-6, 6-2, while 16-year-old Capriati recovered from a sluggish start to down No. 14 Katerina Maleeva of Bulgaria 6-7 (2-7), 6-3, 6-1.

Tauziat has now lost to Seles five times in a row and has yet to win more than four games in any match.

Tauziat complained about Seles' loud grunting during last year's Wimbledon tournament, but a quiet Seles let her devastatingly effective ground strokes speak here.

"I didn't even think about it (grunting)," Seles said. "I don't want it on my mind."

Seles said she was pleased with her form.

"I was really playing solid tennis from all sides," she said. "I was not giving away any free points."

Tauziat said she was helpless when Seles was in top form.

"When she plays like this, sometimes you can't do anything. It's winner, winner, winner. Like a boxing match. One-two-three,"



Pete Sampras

Tauziat said.

Seles and Halard meet in the quarterfinals. No. 2 Steffi Graf of Germany faces Capriati, No. 3 Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina meets No. 10 Mary Pierce of France and No. 4 Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain faces Fernandez, a two-time finalist.

Halard said aggression was the key to her win over Martinez.

"I figure I won the match because I came to the net," she said.

Maleeva was clearly inconvenienced by an injury to her left thigh against Capriati, who won eight of the last nine games.

The Capriati-Graf match will be a repeat of the gold medal match at the Barcelona Olympics on clay last year, which Capriati won. That was her only win in six career matches against Graf.

The tournament offers prize money of U.S. \$4.82 million and continues through Sunday.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Olympic bronze medalist critically injured

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Ana Quirot, Cuba's star women's middle-distance runner, was reported in critical condition from extensive burns suffered in what was described as a household accident. Quirot, an Olympic, Pan American Games and World Cup medalist, was rushed to Calixto Garcia Hospital in Havana. She was treated and placed in an intensive-care burns unit at the Hermanos Ameijeiras Hospital. A dispatch by the Mexican government news agency Notimex, monitored here, said Quirot was seven months pregnant and suffered burns on more than one-third of her body.

Gascoigne, Cragotti deny transfer rumors

LONDON (AP) — Paul Gascoigne and Lazio owner Sergio Cragotti denied rumors that the English soccer star is unhappy and wants to leave the Italian club. Reports in Britain said the Lazio midfielder was unpopular with some of his colleagues and that English clubs were aiming to sign him. The rumors were fuelled by Gascoigne's absence from the Lazio lineup Sunday in a 1-1 tie with Juventus. Gascoigne said, however, he had no plans to leave and Lazio president Cragotti said he expected the player to be around for a long time.

Tomba assaults man in pre-race incident

VEYSONNAZ, Switzerland (AP) — Alberto Tomba hit a cable car attendant and later kicked a desk that shattered a window in a pre-race incident before Sunday's World Cup Slalom that could bring sanctions from international ski officials, a race spokesman said. Tomba bit the attendant in the back with his ski poles after accusing him of opening the cabin door too slowly from the outside, the spokesman, Jean-Pierre Bahler, said. Tomba, a very popular three-time Olympic gold medalist from Italy, has only one victory this season on the World Cup circuit. It was unclear though what caused the outburst. Race organizers gave Tomba 24 hours to issue a public apology or risk a police complaint by the employee, who was not identified. Tomba's manager promised late Sunday that the apology would be issued by Monday, Bahler said.



Italian rally driver Andrea Aghini drives his Lancia H.P. Integral past a group of spectators. Aghini later withdrew when his Lancia tumbled down a ravine (AP photo).

Delecour holds firm as winter arrives

MONTE CARLO (Agencies) — Monte Carlo Rally leader Francois Delecour of France stayed firmly in charge Monday as wintry conditions set in for the first time after world champion Carlos Sainz and fellow Lancia driver Andrea Aghini both crashed spectacularly out of contention.

Though his only real rivals Massimo Biasion of Italy and Didier Auriol of France both clipped a few seconds off his commanding overnight lead in the first three timed stages of the day, Delecour held a 79-second advantage over the Italian.

After springlike conditions over the weekend, temperatures fell sharply, with blustery winds and light snowfall on the higher parts of the course.

But the Ford Escorts of Delecour and Biasion proved equal to the different demands imposed on them and the Italian, who revels in ice and snow, claimed the third stage of the third day, a short sprint between Malijai and Fumichel.

The other two were won by world champion Carlos Sainz of Spain more out of injured pride than anything else.

Sainz went out of contention Sunday when his Lancia went off the road and lost a wheel. He limped to the finish on three wheels but conceded almost 40 minutes and incurred a 15-minute time penalty on top, dropping from fourth to 76th place.

The Spaniard chose to continue to get more familiar with his new car and really put it through its paces in the first two stages of the day at Bayons and the Col de Fontbel.

Auriol, last year's winner in Monte Carlo, was forced to attack in his Toyota after falling more than two minutes behind Delecour in the first two days. He pulled 29 seconds back on the leader, though still trailed by 1:48.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHAHAF
& TAMMAM HIRSH
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

410 VAKQJ86 010853 #36

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

2 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass

What do you bid now?

A.—If you play that a two-over-one response shows a two-over-one value, then three hearts is an adequate rebid. However, if your initial response could be made with a weak suit, we would take our chances and bid four hearts.

Q.2—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

4AQ84 CJ76 0A105 #K82

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass

2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What do you bid now?

A.—With the equivalent of an opening bid facing an opener, and a known eight-card or better fit in a major, there's no point in pussy-footing around. Bid four hearts. Partner is unbalanced, so why you should think so trump might be a better spot, especially with only one sure stopper in diamonds? A forcing jump to three hearts also is acceptable.

Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

43 VAK10872 0AEJ #KJ9

The bidding has proceeded:

South West North East

1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass

2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What do you bid now?

A.—You have 19 points in high cards, but your singleton in partner's suit is more a liability than an asset. We would make an invitational jump to three hearts. Unless partner can act again, game will be,

at best, an iffy proposition. As for a jump to no trump — unthinkable.

Q.4—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

4762 08 0KQ10852 #854

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass

2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What action do you take?

A.—A jump to three diamonds by you would be presumptive, but this is not the hand for such action. You have too many losers in the black suits and diamonds might break badly. We feel a simple two diamonds is adequate.

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

46 VAK108 0KJ107 #A1087

The bidding has proceeded:

South West North East

1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass

2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What action do you take?

A.—You certainly are too strong to sell out to two spades, but you have no idea which suit is best for your side. The way to enlist partner's cooperation is to double. Since North has not yet made a bid, the double is for takeout, not penalties, though partner is free to convert with the right hand.

Q.6—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

4Q V887 0AEJ83 #QJ72

The bidding has proceeded:

South West North East

1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass

2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What action do you take?

A.—You have a minimum opening bid and no fit for partner's suit. Had East passed, you would have had to bid something, but this intervention has relieved you of that responsibility. Pass and leave the driving to partner.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY JANUARY 26, 1993

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The morning should provide surprising opportunities that assist in decreasing the work load, or at least allow a window of spare time unexpectedly. Visit museum or sanctuary in p.m. for rare moment of inspiration.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Don't allow matters at your residence to distract you this morning while the evening brings a period that finds revision in amusements necessary.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You find errands are not as satisfactory as you had hoped unless you use special care and tonight you need to be calm and poised beneath your own roof.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You feel a lack of resources in the morning so devise a better budget and later avoid close companions and concentrate on T.V., radio and good music.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You can't seem to gain your personal longing so put them off until a better time and tonight be sure you do not waste any of your money.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Do the tasks which must be gotten out of the way in the morning so you can consider personal ways to improve and increase your health and magnetism.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You find you are thwarted in gaining an anticipated personal aim and later you do see a way to bring your talents before those who can help you.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Avoid anything of a worldly nature in the morning or you can get some discredit while tonight you need to be equally cautious about personal goals.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Don't put off that urge to be off and away to new activities in the morning while tonight you find matters of a public nature are good for you.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Carry through with a promise you have made even though it annoys you to do so and later stick to your own heart instead of outside activities.

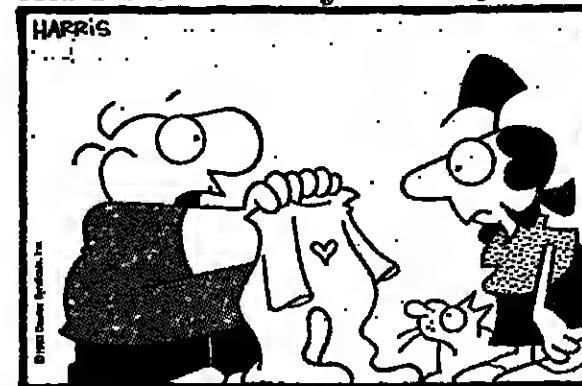
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You will get nowhere with a prejudiced associate in the morning so don't try while later it is difficult to carry through with deals already made.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) An overly sensitive associate can be a real problem unless you soothe wounded feelings in the morning and later don't try to convince a partner of your views.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Don't feel badly because a busy congenial companion cannot share a pleasure with you today but do things that you enjoy by yourself.

THE BETTER HALF

By Harris



"It's the only lingerie I could buy you without getting embarrassed!"

Savicevic is the toast of AC Milan

LONDON (R) — Montenegrin Dejan Savicevic was the toast of AC Milan Monday after his "extraordinary talent" spurred the irresistible Italian Soccer League leaders to yet another landmark.

Midfielder Savicevic scored from the spot in the 75th minute to give his team a 1-0 home win against Genoa Sunday and earn the plaudits of Milan officials.

Savicevic, in only his fourth first division game for Milan, helped the runaway pacemakers to extend their unbeaten run to 52 successive league games.

Their tally of 31 points from 17 matches halfway through the season is one point more than the previous best at that stage.

Milan club president Silvio Berlusconi added his praise: "I've just seen the best 30 minutes soccer of the season. After 20 minutes, we could have been 3-0 up."

Savicevic said: "President Berlusconi did well to tell me to stay... just one month ago, I wanted to leave. I was so disillusioned and sad."

"However, I stayed and I said to myself that I must prove what I'm worth."

Despite his praiseworthy performance, Savicevic must prepare to be dropped for the Italian Cup clash with city rivals Internazionale Wednesday.

He will probably be replaced by Dutchman Ruud Gullit, who has recovered from a bruised thigh.

Second-placed Inter, who trail Milan by eight points, are in confident mood for the Cup tie after an impressive 2-1 away win against Torino.

Inter's Uruguayan striker Ruben Sosa said: "Without any exaggeration, I can say that we

are going into the game against Milan in the best possible conditions."

Lazio's England midfielder Paul Gascoigne, dropped from the side who drew 1-1 with Juventus, is set to return for Thursday's Italian Cup match against Torino.

Germans Karlheinz Riedle and Thomas Doll and Dutchman Aron Winter were Lazio's foreign trio against Juventus because, according to coach Dino Zoff, they are in "better form." But Doll is suspended for the Torino tie.

The last two players to wear the number nine jersey for champions Marseille were the talk of France at the weekend for totally different reasons.

The present incumbent Rudi Voeller scored both his team's goals in the 2-1 win over Lyon, taking a leaf out of the Diego Maradona book of tricks by netting the winner at the stade

Velodrome with his hand.

His predecessor Jean-Pierre Papin, laid low by gastritis flu, did not play for present club AC Milan but the 1991 European Player of the Year was well enough to tell French television he might return to France at the end of the season.

The sports daily L'Equipe, recalling Maradona's "hand of God" quote at the 1986 World Cup finals after fisting the ball into the net against England, headlined their story on the Marseille-Lyon match "the hand of the devil."

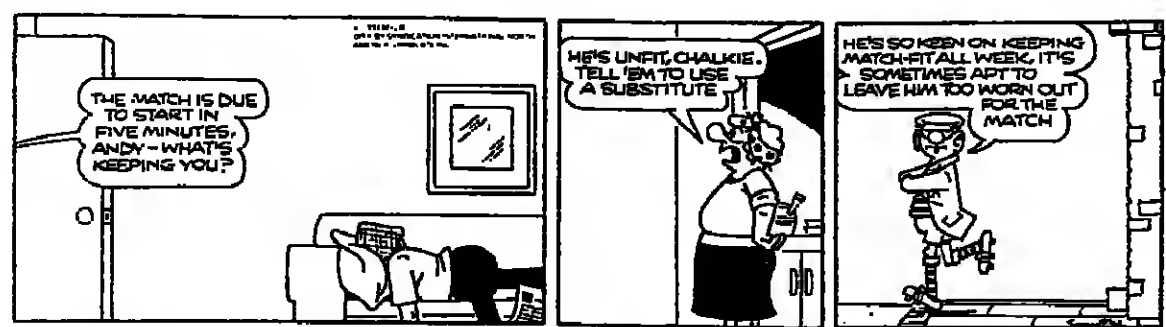
German striker Voeller confessed: "I scored with my hand. It was a reflex action and I'm sorry," he added on his winner eight minutes from time.

The goal kept Marseille in the title hunt, three points behind Monaco who beat Le Havre 2-0.

Peanuts



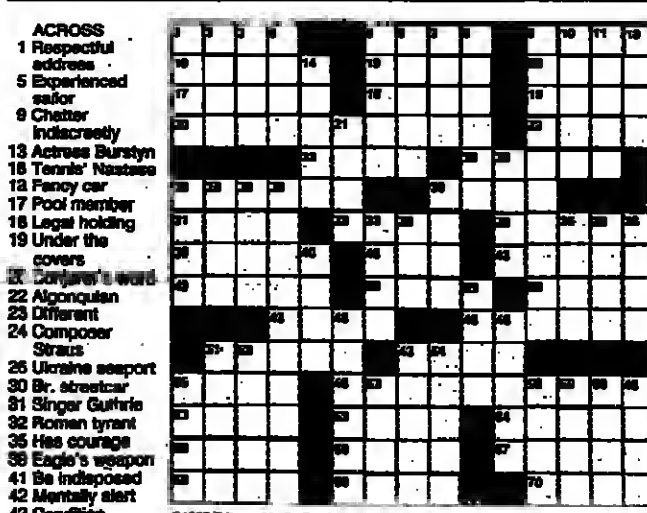
Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE Daily Crossword by Frances Burton



Financial Markets

Jordan Times
in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Jan 25/1/93	Tokyo Close Jan 25/1/93
Sterling Pound	1.5312	1.5345
Deutsche Mark	1.5900	1.5925
Swiss Franc	1.4585	1.4583
French Franc	5.3785	5.3760 **
Japanese Yen	125.11	125.05
European Currency Unit	1.2320	1.2327 **

USD Per STD
* European Opening for 8:00 a.m. GMT

Forex Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.18	3.25	3.43	3.75
Sterling Pound	7.06	6.75	6.50	6.31
Deutsche Mark	8.43	8.25	7.87	7.1
Swiss Franc	5.43	5.50	5.43	5.25
French Franc	11.56	11.25	10.12	9.18
Japanese Yen	3.75	3.62	3.50	3.43
European Currency Unit	9.50	9.63	9.25	8.62

Forex Interest Rates

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	328.55	6.45	Silver	3.77	0.80

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.686	0.688
Sterling Pound	1.0516	1.0569
Deutsche Mark	0.4306	0.4328
Swiss Franc	0.4698	0.4721
French Franc	0.1275	0.1279
Japanese Yen	0.5487	0.5574
Dutch Guilder	0.3832	0.3851
Swedish Krona	0.0960	0.0965
Italian Lira	0.0468	0.0470
Belgian Franc	0.02077	0.02087

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7970	1.8180
Lebanese Lira	0.0350	0.0400
Saudi Riyal	0.1833	0.1845
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2350	2.2900
Qatari Riyal	0.1866	0.1880
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2150
Omani Rial	7.7560	1.7750
UAE Dirham	0.1866	0.1880
Greek Drachma	0.3150	0.3250
Cypriot Pound	1.4370	1.4600

Index

Index	23/1/93	Close	24/1/93	Close
All-Share	191.85		193.06	
Banking Sector	140.55		141.99	
Insurance Sector	210.08		212.46	
Industry Sector	261.52		262.36	
Services Sector	254.41		255.50	

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One U.S. dollar	Canadian dollar
1.27777	0.7510/20
1.5910/20	1.7875/85
1.4600/10	32.72/76
32.72/76	5.3800/50
1462/1467	124.89/94
7.1300/400	6.7530/630
6.1020/120	1.5410/20
One sterling	3328.40/328.90

Egypt, IMF and World Bank said to agree on new reform basics

CAIRO (R) — Egypt, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have agreed on basic terms for a new economic reform agreement but are still thrashing out details, officials and diplomats said Sunday.

"The two sides are expected to reach a new agreement in March," said a Western diplomat after visits last week by IMF and World Bank teams.

"We are really in a stage now where each side is suggesting ways to get around the problems," he said.

A central bank spokeswoman said the IMF delegation held talks with central bank officials on progress in indirect monetary control and development of the foreign exchange market.

It also discussed a link between

debt relief and reductions in Egypt's budget deficit, a Western diplomat said.

Completion of a stand-by facility between the IMF and Egypt was delayed in November because Egypt failed to meet targets for reducing the deficit and moved too slowly for the IMF's liking on reforming its vast, inefficient public sector.

Egypt has targeted a deficit of four per cent of gross domestic product in the financial year ending June 1993 but the IMF argues that debt relief offered by Western donors allows it to cut the deficit even more.

Western economists said the World Bank team headed by its Middle East Director Ram Chopra met two ministers Saturday to discuss the main problem still facing the reforms — the radical overhaul of the ailing public sector, including some privatisation.

The World Bank partially froze a \$300 million structural adjustment loan last June because it was unhappy at the slow rate of progress, particularly on the privatisations.

Cairo has resisted rapid change to avoid higher rates of joblessness which would add to the woes and social strains in Egypt, already suffering from huge poverty and unemployment.

Western economists say another reason for delays in privatisations is huge debts firms owe to banks, which has discouraged private investors.

Clarification

The story entitled "Moneychangers Find Little Money to Earn A Fortune" (Jordan Times, published Jan. 25, 1993) should have included additional information which, inadvertently, was left out.

Mr. Msharbash was reported to have specified three reasons behind the low volume in moneychanging dealings when in fact he mentioned four reasons. The fourth was the rise in the cost of living in Jordan. The expensive economic climate has sharply reduced the ability of Jordanians to travel abroad as often as in the past years and, as a result, demand for foreign currency from moneychangers has also declined.

Another point was dropped out in relation to dealings in the black market. The story should have mentioned that the black market was shrinking because the public was becoming increasingly aware of the rising volume of forged currencies in that market and was seeking more security by dealing more with legal money outlets.

Philippine power woes worsen

MANILA (R) — The power crisis gripping Manila worsened Monday after water leaks forced the closure of one of the country's ageing plants.

Residents reported power cuts of up to seven hours, three hours longer than the daily "brown-outs" that have hit Manila since last year, as a result of the breakdown Sunday of a 200-megawatt plant in suburban Paranaque.

The 25-year-old Paranaque plant is the latest of a series of state-run plants to break down because of old age.

President Fidel Ramos is pushing a crash programme to build diesel-powered generators and relieve the severe shortages that have hit Manila and wide areas of the country since last year.

The crisis has cost industry millions of dollars in lost production and is largely blamed for economic growth being slashed last year to an estimated one per cent, compared with a target of three per cent.

Government officials forecast the power situation will improve by September once new plants come on stream.

At the height of the crisis last year, many cities on the southern island of Mindanao experienced daily cuts lasting up to 15 hours.

Algeria looks to future with lighter foreign debt

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria's foreign debt, \$26.16 billion last year and blamed for crippling the economy, should fall to \$24.44 billion this year and \$20.71 billion in 1995, the official news agency APS said.

Algeria earns around \$12 billion from its exports, mainly oil and gas, and last year spent \$9.42 billion in debt repayment and servicing, the agency said.

The debt service ratio to exports of nearly 78 per cent should fall to 55.2 per cent in 1995, it said in a report published in the government newspaper El Moudjahid Sunday.

Giving the first detailed outlook for the years which the government has promised will see austerity and economic rigour, APS said exports this year were expected to fall to \$12.04 billion from \$12.11 billion last year.

They should then climb to \$13.95 billion in 1995.

More than 90 per cent of Algeria's foreign income comes from gas and oil.

Officials say debt servicing and repayments leave little to import spares or replace old machinery and is a prime cause of the country's unhealthy economy, described by former prime minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali as a "catastrophe."

More than half industry is estimated to work at less than 50 per cent capacity, and unemployment, now over 1.2 million, or one in five of the workforce, is growing at more than 200,000 jobs a year.

Officials blame economic problems for driving many young people into the arms of the Muslim fundamentalist movement, provoking unrest which has further

hit the economy.

Algeria also leaving little for investment or even easing the chronic shortage of medicines.

The government, which has clamped down on what it terms luxury imports, has promised Algeria's 26 million people three to five years of austerity to get the economy back on track.

APS said medium and long term debt would total \$23.74 billion this year, \$21.92 billion in 1994 and \$20.24 billion in 1995.

Short-term debt would fall to \$700 million this year and to \$470 million in 1995. It gave no figure for 1994. Short-term debt two years ago was \$1.24 billion and last year was \$950 million, it said.

The gross national product is expected to rise by two per cent this year and next, mainly due to increases in the area of agriculture and public works, the agency added.

Gulf Arab states urge stricter regulations

ABU DHABI (R) — Gulf Arab states, alarmed by the high incidence of food poisoning and contaminants in food and water, are considering setting up a regional body to stiffen controls on supplies.

Regional health officials Sunday said pollution from the Gulf war, litterage, and high food import volumes were among the reasons for food and water contamination in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.

GCC officials at a seminar partly organised by the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) suggested the GCC enforce labelling of all additives in imported foods, stiffen controls on pesticides and step up food testing for contamination.

Regulations could be monitored by the health council of the GCC — Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait.

"In this part of the world where we practise free trade we have to reevaluate ... whether the food we import is complying with international standards," Dr. Abdul Gadir Mohammad, director of Abu Dhabi's Food and Environment Control Centre told Reuters.

"Food poisoning is increasing in the Gulf," he said. Officials said they want tougher monitoring of levels of radiation, hormones, chemicals, and additives such as pork products — forbidden in Islam — in domestic food and water supplies as well as imports.

An Omani official said his country wants controls on labelling of additives in imported food, such as saccharine levels in syrup for the country's soft drink industry.

"More than 90 per cent of our food and beverages are imported ... we have little to say to determine the composition of these items," Salim Al Harthy, food inspection official said.

The head of Bahrain's ministry of health nutrition unit, said pesticide residues exceeding internationally accepted levels were found on foods in Pakistan, which exports cereals, vegetables and fruits to Bahrain.

"Bahrain imports most of its foods ... making control of contaminants and pesticides a difficult task," he said, adding that varying levels of pesticides were also found on fruits and vegetables in Saudi Arabia.

"Another important factor is ... pesticides and fertilizers are subsidised by the (Bahraini) government. Farmers are often illiterate and often not instructed on safe use of chemicals," he said noting that Bahrain needed proper legislation to deal with sea pollution from sewage discharge and oil refinery effluents which he said are affecting the Gulf island's fish stocks.

Iran's parliament agrees broad outline of budget

TEHRAN (R) — Iran's parliament gave broad approval Sunday to next year's proposed budget, which has set total government revenue at more than 20 trillion rials or \$13.8 billion at the government's floating rate.

Speaker of parliament Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri said on Iran radio the general terms of the budget, for the year starting March 21, were "approved by a large majority" of the assembly.

The draft budget, which was presented by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani last month, has to receive parliament's final approval after its review by several commissions.

Parliament will discuss budget details over the next six days before voting.

The overall budget figure stands at 54.2 trillion rials, and is composed of two parts: The government budget of 25.4 trillion rials, and the budget for the largely self-financing sector of government-affiliated industries,

banks and institutions.

Last week parliament's finance commission trimmed 10 per cent off the government budget, but confirmed a planned devaluation of the rial.

The commission also set government revenue below the 23.5 trillion projected in the draft, cutting projected oil revenue by 638 billion rials.

"Total government revenue has now been set at more than 20 trillion rials," Hossein Hosseini Shahroodi, head of the commission, said last week.

economists have branded as inflationary and unrealistic the draft budget which would nearly double expenditure and incorporate a sharp devaluation of the Rial for much of the economy.

The government plans to stop selling most sectors dollars at concessionary rates of about 67 and 600 rials from next year. The floating rate is currently about 1,450 rials per dollar.

The finance commission met Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei before presenting its revised draft.

Khamenei stressed the need for reasonable estimates of revenue, especially oil income.

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Croats report ousting Serbs from key airport

ZAGREB (R) — Croatia's military commander in chief said Monday his forces had captured the crucial airport of Zemunik and Croats villages nearby from Serb irregulars inside a U.N.-monitored neutral zone near the Adriatic Coast.

"Zemunik Airport is in our hands. Not only have we liberated the road from Maslenica past Zemunik to Zadar but also Croatian villages around it," said General Janko Bobetko. Maslenica is a key transport junction and Zadar a major Adriatic Port outside the U.N. zone.

"Conditions have been created for 20,000 Croatian refugees to return home," he said at a news conference in Zadar carried by Croatian state radio and television.

Gen. Bobetko said he expected Serb irregulars would try to infiltrate the area despite their military setback.

Zemunik Airport is five kilometres east of Zadar just beyond a year-old U.N. truce boundary shattered Friday when Croatian troops stormed into the Krajina enclave in frustration over a U.N. failure to oust Serb rebel forces there.

The airport was an important base for Yugoslavia's federal army during the independence war.

Gen. Bobetko said Serb rebels had heavily mined Zemunik Airport. "We don't know where the minefields are. We don't know all the details of (Serb) destruction there," he said.

"We'll ask UNPROFOR to give us all the information they have," Gen. Bobetko said of the U.N. Protection Force, whose peacekeeping units were swept aside and even shelled by Croatia's army in its offensive into the Serb-occupied Krajina enclave.

Gen. Bobetko said 11 Croatian

soldiers have been killed and 30 wounded in the four days of fighting so far, mainly around Zemunik and Maslenica Bridge which links north and south Croatia. The route had been blocked since 1991 by Serb rebels.

Russia said Monday it might propose international sanctions against Croatia if its forces kept attacking Serbian targets.

ITAR-TASS News Agency quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaly Churkin as saying Moscow had no immediate plans to demand such steps, but its U.N. mission had been briefed on the possibility.

"If the Croatian side does not cease military actions against Serbs, Russia will move a resolution to introduce international sanctions against Croatia," he said.

Yugoslav President Dobrica Cosic accused Croatia Sunday of waging a war against Serbs in the Krajina enclave.

In Belgrade, Serb volunteers prepared to go to the rescue of the Serbs in Krajina.

The renewed fighting in Croatia has threatened to derail Geneva peace talks on the Bosnian conflict.

Meanwhile, Bosnia's Serb-besieged capital Sarajevo was relatively quiet Monday after a night of sporadic shelling and gunfire, local journalists said.

Occasional shelling hit the edge of the old town during the night and in the early hours. One shell landed near the city's parliament building shortly before daybreak.

Anti-aircraft guns were in action in Novo Sarajevo and four shells landed on the new town during the night.

There were no fresh reports Monday on the situation in eastern Bosnia, where intense Muslim-Serb battles have been under way.

In central Bosnia's Gornji Vakuf area, international peacekeeping forces brokered a ceasefire Sunday in the fighting between estranged Muslim and Croat allies.

Late night reports Sunday, however, indicated that fierce clashes continued in the region of Bosnia bordering Serbia.

In Geneva, Yugoslav crisis mediator Cyrus Vance is working to head off pressure in the United States for intervention in Bosnia or an end to the arms embargo on the region, diplomats and officials said Monday.

And despite an upsurge of fighting in Croatia, Mr. Vance and fellow mediator Lord Owen were pressing ahead Monday with talks to end the war in Bosnia.

One source close to the Geneva conference on ex-Yugoslavia said Mr. Vance — a former U.S. secretary of state — and Lord Owen believed any such action as intervention in Bosnia or lifting the arms embargo would set back peace efforts by many months.

"Vance is alarmed at the mounting pressure on the Clinton administration from different sides for some dramatic action and is determined it must not succeed," said a conference official.

In an interview with the U.S. CNN television network Monday, Mr. Vance himself rejected widespread charges that a peace plan for Bosnia he and Lord Owen have tabled rewards rebel Serbs for "ethnic cleansing."

Despite the fighting in Croatia between Croatian forces and ethnic Serbs, the mediators and their aides went ahead with talks on their plan with Bosnia's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic and rebel Serb chief Radovan Karadzic.

Mr. Vance and Lord Owen argue that under the three-part



Residents of Sarajevo carry a wounded man away after he was injured by sniper fires in the downtown area of the Bosnian capital (AFP photo)

plan — the first element of which has already been accepted by Muslims, Serbs and Bosnia's Croats — the rebels will have to give up control over a third of the territory they now hold.

In his CNN remarks, Mr. Vance described as "hogwash" assertions by both liberal and conservative American commentators that the Serbs — who have driven Muslims and Croats out of areas they have seized — would be the big winners.

The three provinces where the Serbs could expect to be in a majority gave them only 43 per cent of Bosnian territory, against the 60 per cent where they were dominant even before the fighting and the 70 per cent they hold now, Mr. Vance declared.

The veteran negotiator, acting for the United Nations, said he and Lord Owen also opposed lifting the U.N.-imposed arms ban on former Yugoslavia because it would "lead to a wider and deeper war which might spread into the lower part of the Balkans."

The result of such a move, apparently under consideration by the new Democratic administration of President Bill Clinton, would be more fighting and more people killed, Mr. Vance said.

A lifting of the embargo, which would need approval of the U.N. Security Council, would also

bring "the very dangerous possibility of spreading the war into other parts of former Yugoslavia and other parts of the region," he said.

Mr. Vance insisted that despite continued fighting and the new conflict in Croatia on Bosnia's western borders a negotiated political solution to the problems of the area was the only one that could work.

He argued that progress had already been made with the acceptance by the Bosnian Serbs last week of a new constitution that created 10 new provinces giving each ethnic group areas where they would feel secure.

Conference officials say discussions between the mediators and all three groups Saturday and Sunday had also moved towards agreeing on the map of these provinces — the next step towards a final settlement.

"We're making progress, strangely, despite all the Croatian incident... So there is a little more hope that you might have expected in the circumstances," Lord Owen told the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Monday.

The final part of the package, an accord on a cessation of hostilities and creation of a demilitarized region in and around the beleaguered capital of Sarajevo, is itself largely agreed, they say.

Angola fighting intensifies; Luanda without water

LUANDA (R) — The Angolan capital was without mains water for a second day Monday after rebel sabotage of the supply system left this sweltering city of two million with only bottled supplies.

The Security Council scheduled debate later in the day on the U.N.'s role in Angola, from where it has threatened to withdraw its monitors because of relentless fighting between government troops and UNITA rebels.

Diplomats said United Nations peace observers were trying to bring the military commanders of the two warring sides together in Addis Ababa later this week to discuss tattered May 1991 peace accords but nothing firm was set.

"Both sides have indicated their willingness to meet but nothing has been confirmed yet," said one diplomat close to the process, adding that UNITA had been hedging on setting a date.

Luanda residents suffering in the summer heat washed with bottled mineral water or in the sea because of what police said was UNITA sabotage on a supply system just outside the city Sunday.

State radio said it could be a couple weeks before water was fully restored to the city.

The radio reported relentless battles over Huambo, UNITA's headquarters in the central highlands, and in southern Menongue and central Kuito. It said government forces had captured a UNITA general and a South African but there was no independent confirmation.

Angola's Minister without Portfolio Lopo Do Nascimento said in the South African capital,

Pretoria, that the Angolan war was unwinnable.

"Neither the government nor UNITA can win the war," he told a news conference.

U.N. sources in Luanda said the Security Council debate would focus on Secretary-General Boutros Ghali's proposal to reduce the organisation's presence to a minimum and to withdraw peace monitors if fighting persists and there are no firm steps towards peace.

The Angolan government fears a U.N. withdrawal will lead to more fighting. The undeclared war began in earnest earlier this month following UNITA's rejection of the results of elections in September and its seizure of some 75 per cent of Angola.

Foreign Minister Venancio De Moura has flown to New York to lobby for the U.N. to stay.

Diplomats believe the government is more willing to talk now that it is on the defensive after the loss of the second most important oil centre, Soyo, and its inability to take Huambo, despite two weeks of intense bombing.

State media reports say UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) is preparing to attack Cabinda, which produces two-thirds of Angola's 550,000 barrels per day of oil accounting for 90 per cent of its foreign revenue.

The U.S. government, which supported UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi during his 16-year civil war against the ruling MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), Sunday warned him not to touch American companies or citizens in Cabinda.

Aspin warns Clinton on gay policy

NEW YORK (R) — New U.S. Defence Secretary Les Aspin has warned President Bill Clinton that Congress and senior military leaders will oppose any immediate attempt to lift the ban on homosexuals in the armed forces, the New York Times reported Monday.

It said Mr. Aspin gave the warning in a confidential memorandum given to Mr. Clinton at the weekend.

The newspaper said that even if Mr. Clinton ordered the ban lifted, Congress could pass a law rescinding his decision.

Mr. Aspin said earlier on television that Mr. Clinton will fulfil his campaign pledge to lift the ban on gays in the military but the policy must be negotiated with the armed forces to avoid "a revolt."

He said he would spend six months working with the military to work out how to end the ban, and brushed aside news reports that General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, might resign over the issue.

The newspaper said that according to the draft memorandum, the administration could count on no more than 30 sure votes out of 100 senators in favour of lifting the ban on gays.

Mr. Aspin brushed aside reports General Powell might resign over the issue.

"That's not in the cards. We're trying to work together on this thing," Mr. Aspin said on CBS Television's Face The Nation.

The issue puts Mr. Clinton, who was inaugurated last Wednesday, at odds with his generals and admirals, who claim that easing the ban would be

prejudicial to good order and discipline in the armed forces.

White House spokesman George Stephanopoulos said Sunday that Mr. Clinton would meet the joint chiefs Monday for a full discussion of the issue.

Close friends of General Powell say he has strong moral and pragmatic objections on lifting the ban on homosexuals, according to Time Magazine's edition due out Monday.

Mr. Clinton's campaign pledge to lift the ban is dividing the American public, according to opinion polls.

A Newsweek magazine poll indicated 53 per cent of Americans people are against changing the ban but a Time/CNN poll showed 57 per cent of those polled do not agree that homosexuals should be banned from the armed forces.

Russia sends relief supplies to blockaded Georgian city

MOSCOW (AP) — A Russian helicopter carrying emergency food aid was waiting to take off Monday for a besieged separatist stronghold in Georgia, a news agency reported.

Bad weather delayed the flight from the Russian Black Sea port of Sochi to Tkvarcheli, a city in the breakaway region of Abkhazia, the Interfax News Agency reported. Georgian troops reportedly have blockaded the city.

The flight is to be the first of 10 in a Russian airlift of 139 tonnes of food for Tkvarcheli, Interfax said, quoting Russian officials in Sochi. The officials said the aid was part of United Nations relief efforts.

Russia's relations with Georgia have been strained since ethnic fighting broke out in Abkhazia

last August. The Tbilisi government has accused Russian troops of helping the Abkhazians in a war that has claimed hundreds of lives and left thousands of people homeless.

Azerbaijan accused of pipeline blast

Meanwhile an Armenian official blamed neighbouring Azerbaijan Sunday for a weekend pipeline explosion which has halted gas supplies to the landlocked Transcaucasian state.

"The result of a subversive plan to deprive Armenia of its last source of energy," ITA-TASS News Agency quoted Armenian presidential spokesman Aram Abramyan as saying.

Advice to Clinton: Study those protocol niceties

WASHINGTON (AP) — Don't give Prince Charles a tea bag. Don't confuse Mauritius with Mauritania. And if the king of Saudi Arabia asks for an autographed picture, please comply.

These are a few diplomatic pointers called from the experiences of past presidents that might help Bill Clinton now that he's moved into the White House.

Mr. Clinton will soon learn that being president is more than drafting economic recovery plans and avoiding the dangers of an unstable world. It's also mastering those personal touches that can make or break relationships with foreign leaders.

Ronald Reagan tells of the day Prince Charles visited the White House. A steward brought tea as the prince and the president sat in the Oval Office.

"I noticed the prince was staring rather gozzically down into his cup," Mr. Reagan recalled in his autobiography. "Finally, it dawned on me. The ushers had given him a cup containing a tea bag. I thought, well, maybe he had never seen one before."

It was nine in the morning of Jimmy Carter's first full day as president that he asked Evan Dobelle to serve as his chief of protocol.

"I don't like pomp and I don't want anything that looks phony," the president told Mr. Dobelle. Like Mr. Clinton, Mr. Carter had been a southern governor with little experience dealing with foreign leaders.

Did that mean Mr. Dobelle had to spend a lot of time briefing the president on the niceties of protocol?

"No," he recalled. "Protocol is really instinctive courtesy. If you're a courteous person then you're going to do well in protocol."

Mr. Carter had his embarrassing moments, as do all presidents. But they had nothing to do with experience.

There was the time the Marine

band played the wrong anthem at a White House ceremony for the president of Romania. And there was the translator nightmare in Poland in 1978.

When Mr. Carter arrived in Warsaw, he spoke of "the desires of the Polish people," which the American translator turned into "your lusts for the future" in Polish.

Later on the same trip, Mr. Carter visited Saudi Arabia. Before he got off his plane, an official asked the president to autograph a picture of himself to give to King Khalid. The president refused, saying he thought it was "the height of vanity" to give an autographed picture of oneself.

Mr. Carter wouldn't budge even when aides explained that the king had autographed pictures of every head of state who had visited Riyadh. Finally, according to one account of the trip, an aide signed the president's name to the picture.

Even the most experienced of presidents have protocol flaps. A State Department official, speaking only on condition of anonymity, recalled the time Richard Nixon had back-to-back meetings at the United Nations with the presidents of Mauritania and Mauritius.

Someone got the briefing cards mixed up, which led to Mr. Nixon asking the president of Mauritania about the production of pork, a commodity forbidden in the strict Muslim country.

Throughout his time in the White House, President Bush drove protocol officials to distraction because he favoured short toasts.

Many foreign leaders at state dinners offer toasts that go on and on. Protocol officials worried that the visiting dignitary's feelings would be hurt by Mr. Bush's very brief response.

But no amount of official pleading could make Mr. Bush a verbose toastmaster.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Denmark's Rasmussen names cabinet

COPENHAGEN (R) — New Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen Monday unveiled Denmark's first Social Democrat-led government since 1982, naming Niels Helveg Petersen of the radical Liberal Party as foreign minister. Mr. Petersen, 54, replacing Uffe Ellemann-Jensen who held the post for 10 years, will play a key role in the EC six-month presidency which Copenhagen assumed on Jan. 1. Mr. Rasmussen, taking over from conservative Prime Minister Poul Schluter who resigned on Jan. 15 over a refugee scandal, named his party's top ideologue Mogens Lykette, 47, as finance minister after Conservative Henning Dyremose. The government, comprising the Social Democrats and the small centrist Centre Democrats, Radical Liberals and Christian People's Party, is the country's first majority administration since 1971 with 90 seats in the 179-member parliament. Its most important task will be to reverse last June's Danish "no" to the EC Maastricht Treaty on European Union. A second Danish referendum is due in late April or May.

1st black on U.S. supreme court dies

WASHINGTON (R) — Thurgood Marshall, a leading fighter in the civil rights struggle of American blacks who became the first black to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court, died Sunday, a court spokeswoman said. Judge Marshall, 84, died of a heart failure at Bethesda Naval Hospital near Washington. He had been in failing health for several years and cited that as the reason for his retirement from the Supreme Court in June 1991. Physically imposing and a lustrous name in the annals of the civil rights struggle, Judge Marshall led the fight as a lawyer before the Supreme Court in the 1950s to abolish racial segregation in American schools. Judge Marshall's place in the history of the civil rights movement was assured in 1954 when he persuaded the Supreme Court to outlaw the "separate but equal" treatment of the races that had been going on for nearly a century. He persuaded the Supreme Court to end the South's "white primary" elections from which black voters were excluded. Appointed to the Supreme Court by President Lyndon Johnson in 1967, he served as a liberal on the high court for nearly a quarter century, writing strongly worded opinions against racial discrimination.

Korean nuclear talks collapse again

SEOUL (R) — Nuclear talks between North and South Korea collapsed Monday when the North refused to discuss anything other than its demand that Seoul cancel war games with the United States, a southern spokesman said. He said officials from the two Koreas failed even to set a date for the next meeting at the border village of Panmunjom to discuss a programme for mutual nuclear inspections. "There was nothing said today that hasn't been said before. The North kept demanding that Team Spirit be cancelled," the spokesman told Reuters. "We warned the North that the talks today should not be used to discuss Team Spirit, but that is exactly what they did."

Indian president urges religious harmony

NEW DELHI (R) — President Shankar Dayal Sharma pleaded with Indians Monday to battle the Hindu-Muslim hatred which has ravaged the country over the past two months, saying India stood at a crossroads. "Fellow citizens, ponder carefully over what I say," he told the nation in a broadcast on the eve of India's Republic Day. "For today, having come this far from independence, India stands at the crossroads of history," he said in an agonised speech following bloodshed triggered by the destruction of a mosque by Hindu extremists on Dec. 6. "Two prospects have emerged before us. On the one hand is the path of understanding, peace, mutual accommodation, friendship, cooperation and common endeavour," Mr. Sharma said. "The other prospect is of endless strife, suffering, agony and misery," he said. "How much more should we be witness to before we decide to abjure communalism and unmask and slay the purveyors of that poisonous creed?"

Major begins talks in India

NEW DELHI (R) — British Prime Minister John Major met Indian leaders Monday during a visit to inject new life into economic relations and assess the shift in India's policies after the collapse of its main ally the Soviet Union. Mr. Major, speaking to reporters during a welcoming ceremony at the presidential palace, dismissed reports of a threat to his safety after police foiled a bomb plot, saying he was "entirely happy" with security arrangements. Police said Sunday they had arrested four Sikh militants who planned to detonate four bombs by remote control at government buildings around the capital to disrupt Tuesday's Republic Day celebrations, at which Major is chief guest. Mr. Major's security officers said he did not appear to be a direct target. Mr. Major, who brought with him a top-level business delegation, has made promoting trade and investment the theme of his visit, which began with a meeting with Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao.

COLUMN

Police step up hunt for mutilator haunting U.K. stables

LONDON (R) — Police stepped up their hunt for an attacker who has mutilated more than 30 horses in southern England after an assault in which a mare was killed and sexually wounded. Police say the attacks are almost certainly sexually motivated. The attacks are an echo of the play and film Equus about a young boy who blinded horses. Stories have circulated in stables that the attacks take place at full moon, but police are leaning away from suggestions they are part of some kind of bizarre occult ritual. Appalled horse-owners have increased security in stables with some installing floodlights or buying guard dogs. Others are sleeping in camp-beds to ensure their horse's safety. "These animals have all been grossly mutilated and the majority of the attacks have been of a sexual nature," said a spokesman for the Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) which is holding crisis talks with police. "As the frequency of the attacks seems to have increased we are now very concerned."

'Britons addicted to TV'

LONDON (R) — Britain is a nation of television addicts and some devotees would not be prised away from their sets for a million pounds, according to a survey of viewing habits Monday. The poll for a television and radio listings magazine asked viewers to consider whether they would give up the habit forever if they were given cash as compensation. Nearly two thirds (64 per cent) said they would not part with their televisions for £10,000 (\$15,200) and a third (33 per cent) would rather continue to watch their favourite programmes than enjoy a \$100,000 (\$152,000) windfall. More than one in 10 (15 per cent) of the 1,000 people interviewed for the Radio Times poll said they would not even be tempted by an offer of £1 million (\$1.52 million).

Do unto others... but not outside the church

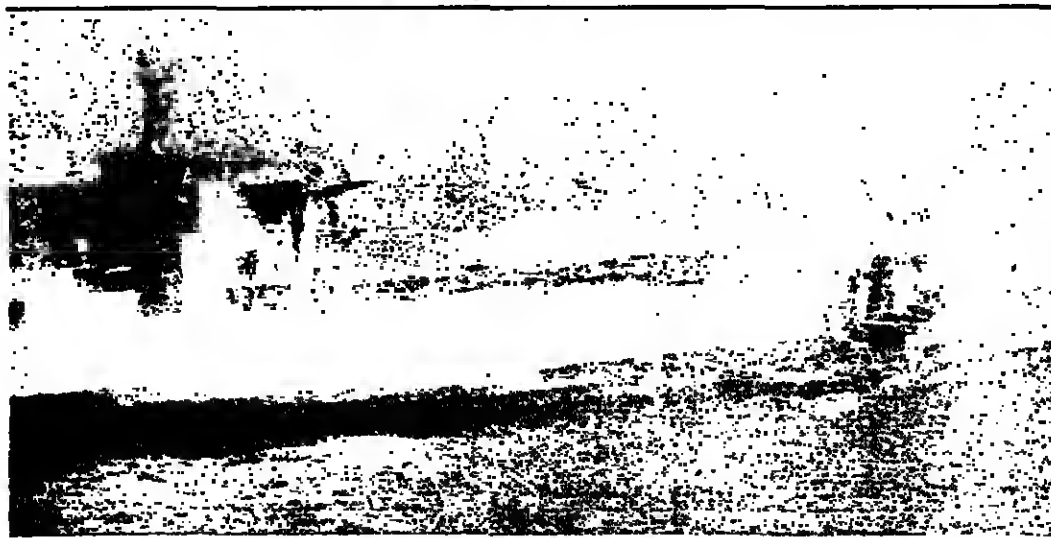
LONDON (R) — Westminster Cathedral, the principal Roman Catholic Church in England, has advised tourists and worshippers not to give money to homeless beggars around the church in central London. Cathedral authorities are distributing a leaflet which says many beggars are "alcoholics and drug addicts" who demand money aggressively. Father Barry Carpenter, Cardinal Basil Hume's personally appointed chaplain to the homeless in central London, said "if there are people begging who clearly have alcohol or drug problems maybe we should be asking why there are not the facilities for helping them."

Death plunge goat fiesta turns into big let-down

MANGANESES DE LA POL-VOROSA, Spain (R) — One of Europe's most notorious fiestas was tamed when locals in a northern Spanish village were prevented from hurling a goat from the top of their church tower. Instead, amid cheers and music from a brass band, they lowered the animal down on a rope and let it fall the last 10 metres into a canvas sheet held open by villagers. "I have to respect the ecologists and conservationists but I also have to respect the villagers," said Mayor Jose Manuel Gil Barrio. "So we have banned the goat-throwing ceremony and sanctioned instead a goat-lowering ceremony."

Forgive me father, I'm sending a fax

LONDON (R) — Roman Catholics around the world who are tormented by their sin but unable to make it to church may soon be able to confess — by fax machine. The Observer newspaper said in a report the new hi-tech confessionals will be unveiled in May in Vincenza, Italy, at an annual trade fair for religious items and furnishings. Soundproofed, air-conditioning and comfortable armchairs will also be included in some models, the newspaper added. Church officials have already criticised the idea and one priest said the fax confessionals had "turned the confessional into a space-age telephone booth."



A tugboat of Singapore's marine firefighting outfit attempts to put out a fire on Danish supertanker Maersk Navigator. The tanker, carrying a load of light crude oil from the Gulf to Japan, caught fire when it collided with the tugboat (AFP photo)

Oil slick drifts towards Indian isles

SINGAPORE (R) — Oil gushing from a burning supertanker off Sumatra has formed a slick 55 kilometres long drifting towards the coconut groves of India's tropical Nicobar Islands, anti-pollution experts said Monday.

But, they said, oil from the Maersk Navigator was spilling more slowly four days after its collision with an empty tanker near the entrance to the busy Malacca Strait.

"More recent reports from personnel aboard the casualty indicate the rate of release has now been significantly reduced," said High Parker of International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Ltd.

On Sunday Mr. Parker said the 255,312-tonne Danish supertanker, which had been fully laden with nearly two million barrels of crude, was spewing tens of tonnes of burning oil an hour, creating a slick 28 kilometres long and 150 metres wide.

The latest statement by the tanker's owners, A.P. Moller (Singapore), said the slick now stretched for 55 kilometres and was one kilometre wide.

"As a result of light and re-

duced wind speed, the oil has spread out as thin films to cover a wider area than Sunday, and the rate of dissipation has also reduced," Mr. Parker said.

He said the slick had moved to within 16 to 24 kilometres of Great Nicobar Island.

"We are closely watching the slick. Our coastguards are on full alert to combat any threat to Nicobar Islands," Indian environment Minister Kamal Nath told Reuters.

Ecologists said the islands were rich in wildlife and bird species and that the 50,000 people living there were mostly immigrants from the mainland growing coconuts.

The region is home to turtles and some endangered species, such as the dugong, a large mammal that may have been the origin of the legendary mermaid.

The tanker is being towed by a salvage tug further southwest into the Indian Ocean to a position 105 kilometres south of Great Nicobar Island and about 130 kilometres west of the northern tip of Sumatra.

At least six more tugs are around the tanker and several are

using powerful water cannons to cool the hull before anti-flame foam can be applied. Fires are blazing around the Number 4 portside tank which ruptured on collision Thursday.

The fire-fighting was ahead of schedule and foams could be sprayed later Monday, A.P. Moller said in the afternoon.

"The fire in tank Number 4 is being contained. The temperature in the vessel's plating is falling due to extensive cooling by water," an A.P. Moller (Singapore) spokesman said.

"Preparations are being made to lay a foam blanket over the fire to effectively extinguish the fire. This operation is now scheduled to take place either late afternoon or at daybreak tomorrow (Tuesday) morning."

The collision with the Sanko Honour took place near the entrance to the Malacca Strait, a crowded 1,000 kilometres waterway between Sumatra and the Malaysian peninsula.

It is the latest in a growing number of accidents in the strait, one of the world's busiest sea lanes that is used for nearly two-thirds of Japan's imported oil.